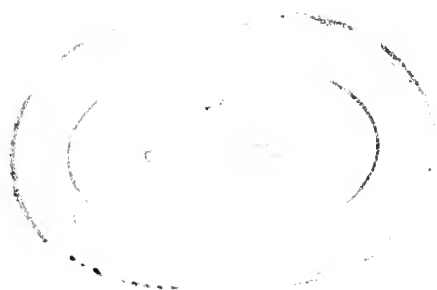



# PERSONAL and SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT



UHL & POWERS







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PERSONAL  
AND  
SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

*A Text in Social Science*

BY  
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DRAWINGS BY FRANK R. PAUL

1938  
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY  
NEW YORK

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*Set up and electrotyped. Published February, 1938.  
Reprinted May, 1938.*

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY THE STRATFORD PRESS, INC., NEW YORK

## Note to Teachers

Citizens and future citizens of America require guidance along the new highway of social responsibility. Travelers on this highway are entering a land blessed with a new social climate—new social forces, new social duties. The pattern of national life by which America was fashioned was once a vision. Citizens and future citizens are engaged in the glorious labor of turning that vision into reality.

*Personal and Social Adjustment*, as here presented, accords with the conviction that social knowledge and attitudes are the product not of nations or states as entities, but of individuals working together. Personal and social adjustment is the chief issue of human living. The general recognition of the truth of this observation is in striking contrast with the general neglect of systematic study of such adjustment. Indeed critics have remarked, deplorably rather than cynically, that schools offer everything save that which is most needed and which pupils most earnestly wish to study.

This volume presents material drawn from various divisions of social studies. It has been prepared with a single purpose, that of providing basic knowledge and principles of personal and social adjustment, stated in language that can be understood readily. The authors have written on the assumption that the real bases of social science are to be found in man's great interest in his own doings and in those of others, and not in the dead framework of a structural sociology. Hence the point of view is developed from functional social psychology, generously supplemented

by such practical aids to social adjustment as study, reading, personality, and character. Activities for the use of this material are provided at the ends of chapters.

While including much, the authors have omitted much. Religion as a means of adjustment is referred to, but a comprehensive discussion of this topic has been omitted, because this book is intended for public-school use, and because private schools and lay readers can supplement the book as they choose. Sex adjustment is recognized as essential, but an extended treatment of this matter has also been omitted because of the continued objection to general discussions of this social problem, except as it arises in biology classes where adequate scientific information immunizes the pupil against oversentimentality. The technique of handling this social problem, obviously, is too little understood at present to raise it above the level of curiosity and mystery.

Five units are included in our discussion of adjustment: (1) Successful Living, (2) Social Life in the Modern World, (3) Types of Personal Adjustment, (4) Types of Social Adjustment, and (5) the Development of Social Responsibility. The authors have found the preparation of this material most stimulating—stimulating, they hope, toward their own personal and social adjustment. For those who study these pages, whether as pupils or teachers or laymen, they hope for equally stimulating experiences.

This material has been tried thoroughly in high school classes, and the authors are deeply indebted to teachers and pupils for numerous helpful suggestions for its revision. Special gratitude is acknowledged to the following teachers and school executives: Elsie Andrews, teacher of English, Sedro-Woolley High School; Leland P. Brown, superintendent, Olympia schools; Mentha Crofoot, teacher

of public speaking, Bremerton High School; H. Reed Fulton, principal, West Seattle High School, Seattle; John W. Goddard, former superintendent, Wenatchee schools; G. W. Greene, superintendent, Sedro-Woolley schools; Paul B. Hanawalt, superintendent, Puyallup schools; Harry P. Hansen, principal, Puyallup Senior High School; F. G. Kennedy, principal, North Central High School, Spokane; Charlotte Kern, vocational adviser, Bremerton High School; Edward H. Liston, teacher of social science, West Seattle High School, Seattle; Worth McClure, superintendent, Seattle schools; W. J. Matters, principal, Olympia High School; Mary Mitchell, teacher of history and psychology, North Central High School, Spokane; T. H. Muncaster, principal, Sedro-Woolley High School; Ruth Orndorff, teacher of English, Wenatchee High School; Patti Patton, head of English department, Wenatchee High School; J. Wellington Pegg, Wenatchee Senior High School; Tillman Peterson, superintendent, Bremerton schools; O. C. Pratt, superintendent, Spokane schools; Hilda Skreen, teacher of English, Puyallup Senior High School; Margaret Stevenson, teacher of English, Wenatchee High School; and Mabel Stromme, teacher of social science, Olympia High School.

The authors gratefully acknowledge also the permission of the following publishers to quote from their publications: J. B. Lippincott Company; Robert M. McBride and Company; Houghton Mifflin Company; The Science Press; Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University; The Swedish Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America; Inor Publishing Company; and Story Magazine, Inc.

WILLIS L. UHL

FRANCIS F. POWERS



# Table of Contents

## UNIT I. SUCCESSFUL LIVING

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. SUCCESS AND ADJUSTMENT . . . . .	3
1. The Key to Successful Living . . . . .	3
2. Is Everyone Successful? . . . . .	6
3. Your Success as <i>Your</i> Problem . . . . .	8
II. YOUR ENVIRONMENT AND YOUR SUCCESS . . .	11
1. What Is Environment? . . . . .	11
2. The Relation of Environment to Heredity . . . . .	13
3. Geographical Conditions as Environment	16
4. Other Human Beings as Environment .	20
5. How to Improve Environment . . . .	25
III. YOUR EQUIPMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING . .	31
1. Man's Structure as a Basis for Human Living . . . . .	31
2. How Our Structure Affects Our Conduct	39
3. Man as a Machine . . . . .	41
4. Man's Unique Organism . . . . .	43
IV. SPECIAL GUIDES TO SUCCESSFUL LIVING . . .	48
1. Three Life Scenes . . . . .	48
2. Guidance through School Studies . . .	50
3. People's Behavior as a Guide . . . .	56
4. Why People Act as They Do . . . .	60
5. Investigation as a Guide to Living . .	62

## UNIT II. SOCIAL LIFE IN THE MODERN WORLD

CHAPTER	PAGE
V. WHY PEOPLE DO THINGS . . . . .	71
1. Discovering People's Motives . . . . .	71
2. Impulses Drive People out of Bounds . . . . .	74
3. People Rebel Against Compulsion . . . . .	76
4. People Are Never Satisfied . . . . .	79
5. Circumstances Force People to Act . . . . .	82
6. Talent Leads to Self-Expression . . . . .	84
7. Money Makes People Work . . . . .	85
VI. HOW PEOPLE DO THINGS . . . . .	88
1. First Things First . . . . .	88
2. Harnessing Ourselves . . . . .	89
3. Making Opportunities . . . . .	94
4. Lone Workers and Group Workers . . . . .	100
5. How People Use Inventions and Discoveries . . . . .	107
VII. CAPITALIZING OUR DIFFERENCES . . . . .	114
1. Why There Are Differences among People . . . . .	114
2. Differences among Individuals . . . . .	117
3. Differences among Races . . . . .	120
4. What to Do about Our Differences . . . . .	126
5. Capitalizing through Guidance . . . . .	127

## UNIT III. TYPES OF PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT

VIII. LEARNING AS PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT . . . . .	139
1. What Is Effective Learning? . . . . .	139
2. Getting Yourself Ready to Learn . . . . .	142
3. Our Aims in Learning . . . . .	148
4. Types of Learning . . . . .	152
5. Possibilities of Improving Learning . . . . .	157
6. Making Your Learning Effective . . . . .	160



CHAPTER	PAGE
IX. EFFICIENT READING AS PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT	178
1. Reading Is a Necessary Personal Skill . . . . .	178
2. Differences in Reading Ability . . . . .	178
3. Types of Reading . . . . .	181
4. Keys to Reading . . . . .	184
5. Common Defects in Reading . . . . .	187
6. A Program for Self-Improvement in Reading . . . . .	192
X. STUDY AS PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT . . . . .	202
1. Why Study? . . . . .	202
2. Types of Study . . . . .	205
3. Sharpening Your Tools for Study . . . . .	207
4. Studying for Examinations . . . . .	215
5. Watch Your Words . . . . .	219
XI. PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT TO PEOPLE AND SITUATIONS . . . . .	227
1. Everyone's Game . . . . .	227
2. Who Am I? . . . . .	229
3. Examples of Studying People . . . . .	236
4. Informal and Formal Study of People . . . . .	241
5. Studying Situations . . . . .	247
UNIT IV. TYPES OF SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT	
XII. HOME LIVING . . . . .	261
1. Your Place in Your Home . . . . .	261
2. People as Products of Their Homes . . . . .	263
3. Recent Changes That Affect Home Living . . . . .	270
4. Standards of Home Living . . . . .	277
5. Keeping Homes Fit for Their Uses . . . . .	283
XIII. SCHOOL LIFE . . . . .	286
1. The School as a Main Current of Life . . . . .	286

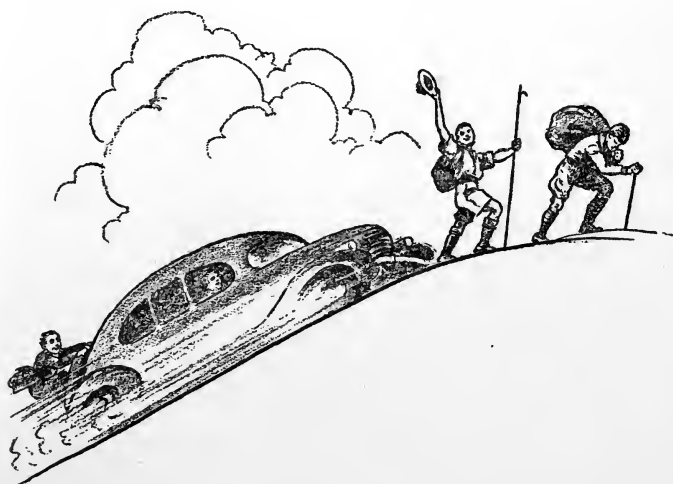
CHAPTER	PAGE
2. The Relation of School Life to Other Life	289
3. Conduct as the Business of School Life .	296
4. Schools Improve Conduct . . . . .	300
XIV. SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND YOURSELF . . . . .	304
1. What Is a Social Institution? . . . . .	304
2. Each Social Institution Depends on Others . . . . .	305
3. Choosing and Organizing Your Social Institutions . . . . .	312
4. Effects of Social Institutions on Their Members . . . . .	319
XV. MORALS AND MANNERS . . . . .	326
1. Morals and Manners Depend on Times and Places . . . . .	326
2. The Moral Question as a Social Ques- tion . . . . .	329
3. Progressive Morality . . . . .	335
4. Manners . . . . .	345
UNIT V. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	
XVI. PERSONALITY AND HOW IT DEVELOPS . . . . .	355
1. What Personality Is . . . . .	355
2. The Value of an Attractive Personality .	359
3. How Personality Develops . . . . .	359
4. Factors That Affect Personality . . . .	361
5. Essential Personality Traits . . . . .	364
6. Personality in Society . . . . .	380
7. Controlling Your Own Personality . . .	381
8. Helping Others in Personality Growth .	383
XVII. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HYGIENE . . . . .	386
1. What Is Hygiene? . . . . .	386
2. Early Years in Health Training . . . .	388

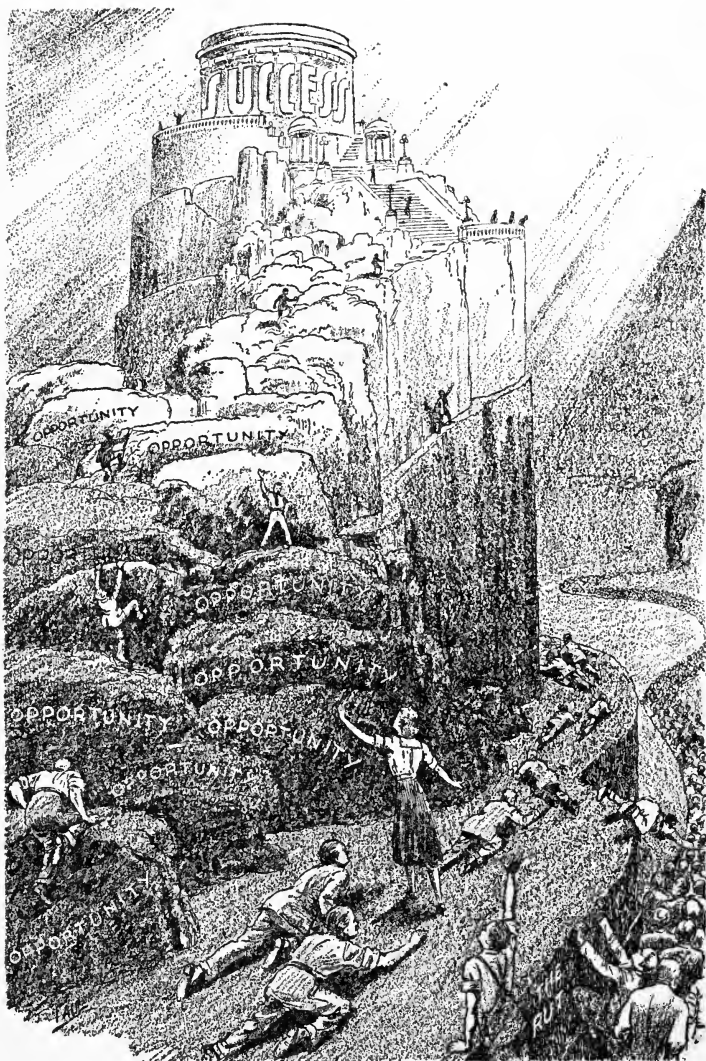
CHAPTER	PAGE
3. Breakdowns in Physical Health . . .	389
4. Health Habits . . . . .	397
5. The Importance of Mental Hygiene . .	403
6. The Relationship between Physical and Mental Hygiene . . . . .	404
7. Enemies of Mental Health . . . . .	406
8. Friends of Mental Health . . . . .	416
9. Personal Efficiency . . . . .	425
10. Helping Others Attain Mental Health .	427
11. Self-Improvement . . . . .	430
XVIII. YOUR CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP . . . .	434
1. A Man and His Marks of Character . .	434
2. You and Your Character . . . . .	435
3. Character as Personal Adjustment to the World . . . . .	438
4. How to Develop Character . . . . .	445
5. Is Human Perfection Possible? . . . .	452
6. Is Character Development Too Much of a Strain? . . . . .	453
7. Does Success Depend on High Charac- ter? . . . . .	455
8. Citizenship as a Co-operative Responsi- bility . . . . .	460



# UNIT I

## SUCCESSFUL LIVING





THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

## CHAPTER I

# Success and Adjustment

### I. THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL LIVING

SUCCESS in ten minutes! That is the record of one famous man. For ten years a cartoon a week had brought him a living, but not distinctive success. Then came his "Believe It or Not," with the announcement that Lindbergh was the sixty-seventh man to cross the Atlantic in a nonstop flight. From that day in September, 1928, to the present, he has made both a living and a success by startling people as they read their morning papers. This man now receives more than a million letters a year, but still better for him, millions of people buy newspapers daily to look at Robert L. Ripley's cartoons.

Failure in ten minutes! That is the dismal record of another man. This man—his name does not matter, for daily newspapers have cited many cases identical with his—reached the peak of financial achievement in 1929. He was regarded as an upright and successful businessman. Then, unexpectedly, came the Stock Market crash; the value of his shares dropped like a plummet, and at the same time others that he had contracted for fell far lower than he had expected them to go. He faced two choices: He could sell his stocks and lose his money, or he could pay for them with other people's money—and possibly save his investment. In ten minutes he had made his decision. Today

this man, who for many years had been considered a model citizen and a prosperous executive, is serving a long sentence in prison.

These men represent extremes of success and failure. One of them adjusted himself to attain success; the other, gambling for possible success, risked the more probable failure which eventually crashed upon him and left his life in ruins. Can you profit by these instances? We think that you can. Probably you will not be able to adjust yourself for a success identical with Mr. Ripley's, for each person can succeed only in his own way. But surely there is a lesson in his example. And although it is true that few people can adjust themselves against all types of failure, still we can learn much of value from the cases of those men who are now wearing striped uniforms.

True success—success that helps both yourself and other people—demands that you consider the social effects of your actions. To succeed, you must adjust yourself to other people, as Mr. Ripley does, for no one can prosper entirely by himself. Cartoons would have but little value, even to the artist who drew them, if no one enjoyed looking at them. Accomplishment, then, is a social problem, because it compels a person to study not only himself, but also other people, adjusting and readjusting himself to them from time to time. Your own success is founded on an understanding of social relations; this, in turn, rises largely out of your comprehension of social science.

Social science is the study of people—their thoughts and actions, the motives behind their thoughts and actions, and the social effects of their behavior.

This book may be properly said to deal with the subject of social science, for it discusses human thought and ac-



tion. Its purpose is primarily to show you how to plan your actions and carry out your plans successfully. If you learn to do these two things—to plan your actions and to achieve your plans in practice—and if your actions help other people as well as yourself, you will be personally and socially adjusted. And successful personal and social adjustment is the key to successful living.

Three matters implied in the above discussion may need further treatment at this point. First, it was said that true success helps other people as well as yourself. This is, indeed, the only kind of success which we intend to discuss. The Boy Scout with his "good turn" daily, the truck driver who pulls your car out of a ditch, the inventor who makes light shine more brightly in your home at night—these are the individuals who attain true success. For real achievement a person need not be famous, but he does need to consider the social effects of his actions.

Another point to be treated briefly here is that success demands frequent new adjustments from time to time, as the situations which we have to face vary. If we could become adjusted like a clock and then run on and on in the same way, our lives would probably be simpler, but we should not have achieved success by ourselves. Instead of being adjusted in one fixed way for the rest of their lives, successful people continually readjust themselves in many ways, as they develop ability to meet changing conditions. A well-adjusted little child may eat all his food with a spoon, but a well-adjusted youth uses other utensils also. You read a popular novel rapidly, but you must adjust yourself to a much slower rate in order to study a mathematics book successfully. Therefore when we say that a person is well adjusted, we mean that he has de-

veloped the flexibility to meet new conditions as they arise, to change his behavior according to changing circumstances.

The third point to be mentioned is concerned with the carrying out of plans. Social science of the kind described in this book is of little value if it leads only to the making of plans. To be valuable, it must result in action. The farmer who makes fine plans in the winter but fails to carry them out in the summer, never has a crop to harvest. Planning is, of course, a necessary first step in any achievement, but the attainment of complete success demands also the carrying out of plans.

Success in ten minutes is rare. In fact Mr. Ripley worked fairly successfully for many years before he achieved distinctive success. Most people's lives are filled with small successes the number of which they try to increase and with small failures the number of which they try to reduce. The best formula for the attainment of success, whether it be great or small, is the ability to adjust and readjust oneself personally and socially. This ability is exhibited by the person who, by exerting himself, rises, year after year, above his small failures to new and higher successes.

## 2. IS EVERYONE SUCCESSFUL?

People often seem to be blind to what really constitutes success. One reason for this error is that they appreciate but one kind of achievement: Most men prize only financial success; boys frequently esteem nothing but athletic or military glory; while girls are notorious for the one-sided worship they pay to movie stars. Hence they overlook successes that are just as common and often more significant. Sometimes, indeed, this blindness leads them

to judge the most successful people as failures. The poet John Keats spent most of his life in poverty, his works were bitterly attacked by hostile critics, his only romance seems to have been an unhappy one, and he died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-six. Yet though many would deem his whole life a failure, his poetry remains one of the treasures of English literature, and his name lives long after those of the outstanding soldiers, plutocrats, and statesmen of his day have been forgotten.

Most persons, even habitual failures, attain occasional successes of some kind. The real problem of advancement is to find out how to continue the success that we have achieved and how to extend it into new fields. Moreover in trying to continue and extend our accomplishments, we should fix our attention on the positive, not on the negative—on what we can do rather than on what we cannot do.

If we focus our observation on what we can do, we must note two factors—our opportunity, plus whatever abilities we may happen to have in adjusting to it. These two factors taken together may be called our situation. Usually this situation is fraught with such difficulties that many people give up and are content simply to accept whatever comes. You will find, in this book, discussions which may help you to understand your own situation. But it must be remembered that no one can succeed alone; your situation is both a personal and a social one. This is merely another way of saying that *the science of success is a social science*.

The relationship of your personal and social adjustment to your success has been treated earlier in this chapter. It is virtually an axiom that your success will be proportional to your adjustment. But we have also spoken of

your ability to *readjust* yourself. With certainty it may be said that the greater your ability to *readjust* yourself, the greater your success will be—not only today but also throughout life. You may ask, “Is it not hard enough to adjust myself once? Why make life more difficult by requiring me to keep readjusting myself as long as I live?” But difficult as such recurring readjustment may be, life would become still more difficult without it. You cannot evade this thorny responsibility, and though the price of continual adjustment and readjustment is admittedly high, success is impossible unless you can pay this price.

Few people, it is true, are willing to pay it. Indeed they creep along when they might climb. Instead of exerting themselves effectively to achieve, they are content, listlessly, to let things happen to them. To be able to afford the cost of success, people must study their situations and plan definitely for the kinds of achievement they desire and seek.

We have asked: Is everyone successful? The answer is that everyone has at least small successes. To this we should add: Nearly everyone can greatly increase his prospects of success by studying his situation, by planning, and by acting intelligently.

### 3. YOUR SUCCESS AS *your* PROBLEM

Is your success your personal problem, or is it a problem of the stars under which you were born? Obviously it is your own problem; in fact it is the main one of your life. It is this that pushes you from behind, turns you this way or that way, and pulls you forward. Never will the problem leave you, for it will never be completely solved. If it were to leave you or if it were to be solved, you would

soon discontinue all progress, for nothing would urge you onward. Moreover *how to succeed* is a question that will never solve itself. Instead it remains as a ceaseless challenge to you for the best plans that you can make and for further actions to fit your plans.

As soon as you begin seriously to study your problem of succeeding, you will undoubtedly find yourself considering certain of the following conditions that affect your living:

- Your surroundings or environment
- Your physical equipment and fitness
- Your preparation to carry out your plans
- Your ability and willingness to develop yourself
- Your understanding of other people
- Your thoughts about human life
- Your life work
- Your recreations
- Your hobbies
- Your future home
- Your personality
- Your ability to take care of yourself physically and mentally
- Your social and political life
- Your character

These topics and many others are to be discussed in the later chapters of this book. The information you will find there should help you to adjust yourself successfully throughout your life. This material will be presented in five units: (1) Successful Living; (2) Social Life in the Modern World; (3) Types of Personal Adjustment; (4) Types of Social Adjustment; and (5) the Development of Social Responsibility. In your study of social science, you should try to apply this material to your own life. If questions occur to you, they should be discussed with your

friends and counselors, for other people have faced the same problems, and their experiences may help you to solve your difficulties.

### *Further Reading*

Edmonson, J. B., and Dondineau, Arthur, *Vocations Through Problems* (The Macmillan Company, 1936). Chapter I.

ZuTavern, A. B., and Bullock, A. E., *The Business of Life* (Commercial Textbook Company, South Pasadena, California, 1935). Chapter VI.

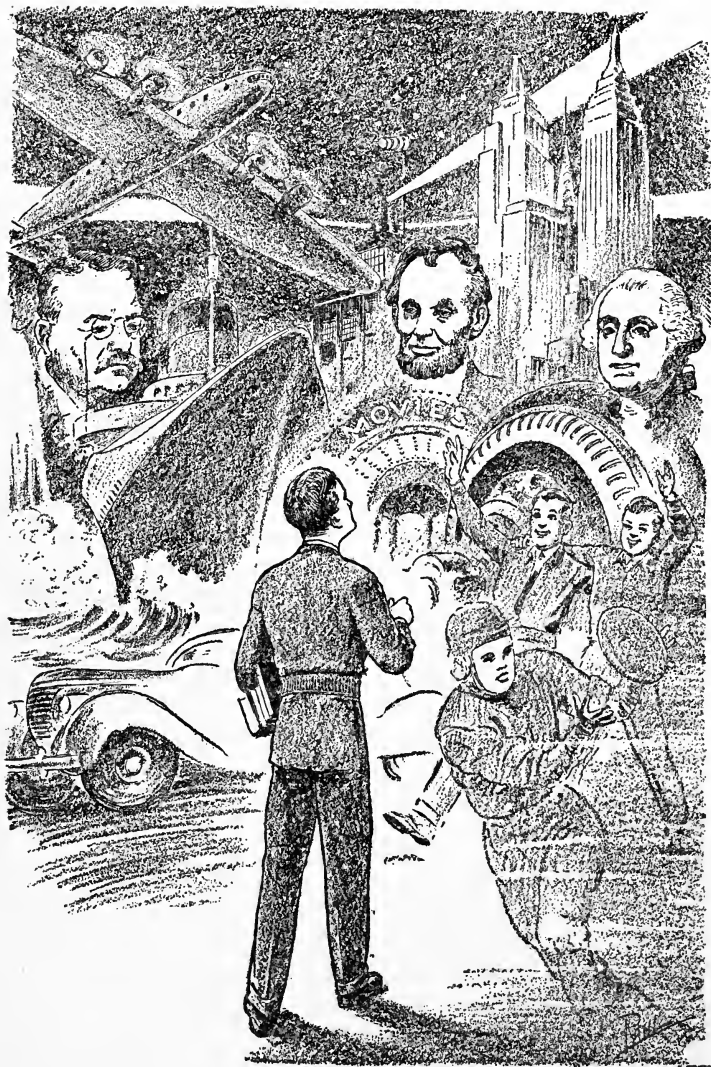
## CHAPTER II

# Your Environment and Your Success

### I. WHAT IS ENVIRONMENT?

Two men were talking about the forces of environment. One was annoyed by the extravagant opinion of the other, who asserted that people are what their environment has made them. Finally the doubter asked, "What do you mean by environment—clothes?" The enthusiast replied, "No, of course not." The answer should have been, "Yes, of course; that surely is a part of it."

Environment may include everything that exists outside ourselves. However as discussed in this chapter, the term is used to embrace only *those outside conditions that affect us*. If a person is influenced by other human beings, they are a part of his environment. Some of these human beings may be thousands of miles distant and still change our attitudes and actions. When the Japanese crown prince was born, late in 1933, he became at once a part of the environment of many Americans. If he should prove as vigorous a ruler as his father, he will probably touch the lives of all peoples, even though they may never know his name. Sun, moon, and stars are the most remote parts of our environment, but they are also among the most significant: They affect our food, clothing, shelter, conversation, and the chemistry of our bodies. Similarly sidewalks, newspapers, radios, and our animal pets are parts of our



ELEMENTS OF AMERICAN ENVIRONMENT



universe and, therefore, of our environment—for they, too, affect our lives.

Most types of environment are certain to affect us, but fortunately, nearly all can be adjusted to our own purposes. The aim of this chapter is to point out some of the ways in which we can adapt our environment to our own use—for just as we can adjust and readjust ourselves, so we can adapt and readapt our environments to our needs. After analyzing the relation of environment to heredity, we shall discuss two kinds of environment—geographical conditions and human beings. Finally we shall enumerate several ways in which environment can be adapted and improved.

## 2. THE RELATION OF ENVIRONMENT TO HEREDITY

For hundreds of years, debaters have tried to decide which is the stronger, environment or heredity. The difficulty in solving this problem is that the two influences are inseparable—no one has lived without being affected by both of them. In every large community of America, there are children who scarcely would have seen the light of day if their parents had lived in central Africa or the Arctic regions. Fellow tribesmen or climate would have destroyed them in early infancy. For such frail persons of defective heredity, the most hospitable conditions are necessary for sheer existence. Debaters might as well argue that food is more important than air, as attempt to show that either environment or heredity is the stronger influence.

Theodore Roosevelt was a striking illustration of the relationship between heredity and environment. For some reason—probably hereditary—he was unable to react

normally to certain factors in his surroundings. In his early years of schooling, he could not see what was written on a blackboard unless he stood within a few feet of it. Blades of grass appeared a solid, unbroken mass of green in the lawn where he walked. Elm leaves were shaped like maple leaves, as they hung on branches above him. However he was fortunate enough to have been born into a congenial environment—one which enabled him to remedy his defects by means of lenses which gave him what other children had naturally by heredity. Had he been cast into one of the many desert areas where sunlight and ignorance are intense, he might easily have been a blind beggar.

This combination of heredity and environment, as in the case of Roosevelt, influences many of us. His ancestors had emigrated to America. Their physiques were sufficiently hardy for the conditions of a new country. They became leaders in the life of their colony and, later, in New York State. America changed, and the succeeding generations of Roosevelts adapted themselves to the new conditions. They remained in New York, where political leadership has greater national significance than it has in New Mexico or Alaska. The strenuous Theodore Roosevelt found there an opportunity which his physique enabled him to grasp. An imposing series of successes in his state enabled him to continue with a broader series of successes in national affairs. In this more extensive activity he became one of the central features of the environment of his day. Today his work is still a part of the environment of everyone who is affected by the Panama Canal, by relations with South America, by governmental control of large business organizations, by the popularization of ranchmen's life, and by many other affairs with which the reader is already familiar. Which of Mr. Roosevelt's

activities were due to environment and which were due to heredity, no one knows. That all were due to a combination of environment and heredity, everyone agrees. Debates about the relative strength of these two conditions may be interesting, but seldom, if ever, do they settle the question.

The relationship between environment and heredity can be illustrated further by the manner in which people now react to Mr. Roosevelt's career. A New York Republican of Dutch ancestry may react favorably and a Texas Democrat of English ancestry unfavorably. A strenuous sportsman may admire Roosevelt, while a person of low vitality may be jealous of his fine physique and therefore dislike him. In these two pairs of attitudes toward him, environment and heredity play obvious parts.

More striking evidence of the close interconnection of heredity with environment is supplied by the fact that neither operates without being influenced by the other. In any environment where persons of different races mingle freely and intermarry, heredity is markedly different from that in localities where there is little or no marriage between members of different races. To the extent that children are like their parents in weakness or strength, we find another possible effect of environment on heredity. For example conditions which are so favorable that nearly all persons in a locality grow to adulthood, may seriously weaken many of the offspring—for the unfit are able to survive and reproduce. On the other hand severe conditions which cause nearly all weak persons to perish before adulthood may lead to strong offspring—for only the fittest can exist and have children. How many of these effects are due mainly to conditions after birth rather than to strictly hereditary qualities has never been discovered.

Heredity gives each of us a body; environment gives us a place in which to use that body. By studying both, we can learn to live more fully whatever kind of existence we may eventually lead. A well-adjusted person displays such a combination of these two sets of conditions that no one can tell where one ends and the other begins.

### 3. GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS AS ENVIRONMENT

The environmental importance of geographical conditions has already been noted, and many of the effects of these conditions need only be suggested in this discussion. By geographical conditions we mean not only scenery and soil, but also the distribution of people in various localities—that is, social, political, and economic geography. This extension beyond what is sometimes called geography is necessary here because the effects of the earth cannot be separated sharply from the people who live on it.

Geographical conditions affect the health and, therefore, the mental condition of people. For example typhoid fever for many years was more than three times as common in Maryland as it was in Massachusetts. How much of this difference was due to the location of these states and how much was due to the living conditions which the inhabitants had devised, no one can tell. Goiter is ten times as common in the Northwest and in Michigan and Wisconsin as it is in the row of states from Arizona to Florida. As goiter is due principally to a lack of iodine, the natural condition of the water supply is largely responsible for this disease. A different case is that of tuberculosis, which is about four times as common in the Southwest as it is in the Northern states from Idaho to Minnesota. Frequently physicians advise tuberculous patients to migrate to resorts

where the air is supposed to have beneficial effects in checking this disease. These cases show that the absence of a chemical (iodine) or the presence of certain air conditions may influence either the presence or absence of disease and all its mental effects.

More than half the people of America now live in urban communities. The change from rural to urban life which has occurred in the last one hundred years, has brought an increase in certain health conditions and a decrease in others. As contagious diseases can spread more rapidly in cities than in rural areas, such diseases as diphtheria were once more common among city children than among country children. But the prevention and treatment of diseases is better in cities than in rural localities, and so the total annual illness rate in cities is lower than elsewhere. Other surveys show similar differences among the various cities, certain localities being more likely than others to be afflicted with certain diseases.

These examples of the effects of geographical conditions upon health are given to illustrate some of the problems encountered in studying the influences of environment and the relation of geography to what may be called mental health. As most of these conditions can be altered and improved, to the benefit of many afflicted persons, one of the important problems of human life depends on the betterment of geographical environment.

The natural resources of a locality affect human conduct in other ways. Gary, Indiana, may be taken as an example. Forty years ago this locality seemed to be entirely without valuable resources. Shifting sands made it useless for agriculture; its distance from Chicago, although not great, made it apparently useless for commercial development; and its distance from mineral resources seemed to make

it useless for industrial purposes. It was, therefore, almost uninhabited. Soon afterward, however, the necessary resources were found near by. Lake Michigan lay alongside it, and numerous railway lines cut across it. Iron ore and coal were brought in and vast steel plants arose. Then followed calls for workers. Within twenty years, from 1896 to 1916, Gary became famous for its steel mills and its industrial problems.

Gary was a melting pot for human beings as well as for iron ore. The clashing of the cultures of hordes of workers from the Southern states, from Mexico, and from eastern and southern Europe, and of a minority of managers from the Chicago area, produced a major problem of Americanization. From fifteen to twenty-five nationalities were often represented in the classrooms of these newcomers' children. Languages, religions, and standards of living were changing to meet the conditions of a crowded city. Much that had been wrong in the native lands of these peoples was right in Gary, and much that had been right was wrong. Little children became interpreters of America to their own parents. Americanization went on, too slowly in certain desirable ways and too rapidly in other ways—too slowly in the understanding and adoption of the best in America, and too rapidly in copying the outer show of vulgarity, spending, and lawlessness. Too often these workers cast off many good qualities of their own cultures, in their praiseworthy, but misguided, attempts to become citizens of Gary's new culture.

A further discussion of human beings as constituting an important part of environment follows in the next section. Enough has been said here to show how the geographical resources of one city have influenced the human life there. Something of this kind, probably far less extreme, has

happened in nearly all American localities, rural as well as urban.

Climate affects everyone. It cultivates hardiness in the Eskimo, who must shelter himself with ice, find his food beneath the ice, and clothe himself with fur. It cultivates idleness in the tropical islander, who needs only simple shelter, food that grows everywhere, and clothing enough for decency. The severity of the climate has led the Eskimo to show his reverence for the weak and the aged by kindly ending the life of the helpless, whether young or old. The mildness of the climate has led the tropical islanders to show their reverence for the aged by kindly granting to everyone the hospitality which generous Nature supplies almost ready for use. Much of the art of the Eskimo is expressed in designs on tools and weapons, while that of the tropical islander includes designs on his own brown body.

The climate of the temperate zones favors a varied life of sowing, cultivating, harvesting, and preserving food. With sowing and harvesting, have come festivals with their singing and dancing. The need for shelter, fit for rain or sunshine and heat or cold, has encouraged the building of permanent houses, as well as a settled home life. Clothing for this variable climate has to suit the season, and this variety has led to the use of different materials, each with its demands upon the care and thrift of those who fashion and of those who wear the garments.

Other geographical conditions might be mentioned as forces which influence human life. Scenery is so important that most persons think of their own homes largely in terms of the mountains, lakes, plains, or city buildings which surround them. People are so closely related to scenery that moving to a new locality often seems like beginning life anew. The relation of quality of soil, rainfall,

elevation, and so on, to the mode of living is equally obvious.

This section has cited examples of the relationship of geographical conditions to health, industry, rural and urban life, customs, habits, and attitudes. Our brief list can be lengthened by anyone who compares carefully any two localities. No one could assert that these human situations are entirely the result of geographical conditions; but it is quite clear that of the many influences affecting our situation, geographical conditions are among the most important, and that man can either adapt these conditions to himself or adjust himself to them.

#### 4. OTHER HUMAN BEINGS AS ENVIRONMENT

Of all forces of environment, human beings are the most significant. What we are depends on the people with whom we live and associate. No one has ever developed a self alone—unless it was the first person on the earth. The self-made man or woman cannot be found.

The influence of geographical climate has just been discussed. We shall now turn to the topic of *social* climate. *Social climate is determined by the people about us as far as they affect us.* It is such human "climate" more than anything else in our environment that makes us think and act as we do. Public opinion, for example, has far more influence than scenery upon most of our lives.

The importance of social climate has been familiar to us ever since we first noticed that different people or groups of people affected us differently. With our closest friends we sometimes think or even say, "Now we can be ourselves." What we mean is that we can be more at ease with them than with other people. We can then do or say



more nearly what we wish to than we can with certain other persons. With our friends we are off guard, but with strangers and with certain acquaintances we are constantly on the defensive. Our thoughts come freely with friends, but our fear of doing the wrong thing cramps even our thinking in the presence of those whom we distrust.

This does not mean that it would be advisable for us to associate only with close friends. If we did so, we should probably fail to get rid of the childish notion that everyone else is odd. Also, we should not then become the selves that we wish to be. In fact the "spoiled" person is one who has never knocked elbows with anyone who successfully disagreed with him. The cure for such an individual is generally found when enough persons successfully disagree and show him that other individuals have rights to thoughts and property. Learning such a lesson is like learning any other lesson—many practice periods are needed for it, except in the case of the bully, who usually learns it in one thorough trouncing. We may say then that a "severe" social climate is often helpful. The timid person who is "spoiled" in the opposite direction needs another kind of instruction. He needs lessons that will teach confidence—lessons that are so planned that he will have a series of successes. For him a "mild" social climate is helpful.

Our own teachers, in or out of school, therefore, should be of varied types. For our sake they should plan the kinds of social climates that we need at different times. Such planning is difficult for three reasons: (1) We are not always alike—at times we may be irritable, while at other times we may be our "best selves"; (2) we are likely to try to conceal our thoughts from teachers; and (3) our teachers have selves of their own which should continue

to develop. These three conditions are, in part, desirable—certainly we should try to be our “best selves” all the time. Again, if we should fail at times to conceal our thoughts, other people as well as ourselves might be the worse for it. Finally if our teachers, including everyone from whom we learn, were always as we might wish them to be, they would soon cease to be stimulating teachers; instead they might provide too mild a social climate for us.

There is such lack of stimulation when people become provincial. *Provincialism is a condition that often results from staying in one community with associates who are too much like ourselves.* Provincialism does not depend upon the size of the community—for a person from New York may be just as provincial as one from the smallest town. Provincial people think that their community has discovered the only right way of doing things; consequently provincialism consists of “falling into a rut” and staying there. When teachers are provincial, they allow us to stay in our narrow rut and to think that the ways of our own group or community are the only good ways of living. The narrow-mindedness of anyone who is provincial calls for lessons from teachers who are not provincial—who can show that there are many good ways of doing things and of thinking of life, instead of only one. As late as 1900, provincials in certain American villages still believed that the reading of any novel by such authors as Dickens or Stevenson was wicked. In this extreme case, nonprovincials finally became the teachers, the children found good ways of living described in the previously forbidden books, and eventually the older provincials passed out of the picture. Provincials and other narrow-minded persons need teachers who help preserve what is good in the old ways, but at the same time look closely for what may be good in the new.

Since all of us are narrow-minded in some ways, we need a severe enough social climate to force us out of bad habits and drive us toward adopting new and better ways of living.

All persons with whom we come into contact affect our conduct. Moreover by responding to other persons as we do, we affect the ways in which they respond to us. In this way we make our own social climate or climates. An example of this is the case of a brilliant boy who always responded well in his classes. There he produced a fairly severe climate for his less able mates; his teachers could bear heavily upon him and his classmates showed him fairly high respect. Outside his classes, conditions were different. He was bored by sports, and although he was not timid, his playmates treated him as if he were. At first he avoided them; later when they noticed his retirement from games, they began attacking him. Continuing to avoid them, he developed in them a bullying tendency and, in himself, an appearance of timidity, until they drove him home from school. In desperation, his mother threatened him with physical punishment if he ever allowed this to happen again. The severity of the new social climate at home, which he himself had caused, led him to turn upon his annoyers and show them what was what. He later became a social leader and president of his class. In his case, his mother, his teachers, and his playmates were all effective teachers who, together with himself, constituted his social climate.

Other indirect environmental forces are the attitudes of people. The effects of provincial attitudes have already been mentioned. The power of motion pictures to change opinions is also a striking example and has been verified by an experiment in which the attitudes of many school

pupils were measured before and after they had been shown certain photoplays. One picture increased the pupils' friendliness toward the Chinese, while another lowered it. These changes in attitude were measured by having the pupils indicate their likes and dislikes for various countries by numbering different nations in their order of preference. The Chinese were given a fairly low rating before the picture. Afterward the pupils who had seen a favorable picture rated the Chinese fairly high, while those who had seen an unfavorable one rated them still lower than they had at first. A photoplay in which a gambler was the chief character was used in a similar way. Before they had seen the picture, the pupils seemed to think of a gambler as a crafty but interesting sportsman, and so they gave him a fairly high rating as compared with offensive criminals. But in the picture, the gambler went from bad to worse, and ended as a desperate criminal. After this picture was exhibited, the gambler was given a very low rating by the pupils. What his rating would have been, had he been "lucky" and given his money to an orthopedic hospital, can be readily guessed. To a great extent, therefore, the producers of pictures affect our attitudes, and to some extent, we take a lesson in attitudes whenever we visit the theater. Pictures help to form our social climate. Anyone can see that the same kind of effect is produced by associates, books, teachers, public speakers, and others; and furthermore that our own effect upon them is similar.

Many other indirect forces work upon us. Laws, traditions, customs, standards of living, institutions (such as homes, churches, communities, the press, etc.), architecture, roads—all these and many others help to make us what we are. The African chieftain who lost his heart to

an enormous lady who bathed herself in oil got his notion of enchantment by the same types of influences as did the mountaineer of the Caucasus whose lady of dreams was a sylphlike water carrier. Likewise the rough-and-ready manner of many Americans is the product of American customs, as truly as the formal politeness of the Japanese is the product of Japanese home life. If any of us had spent our lives happily in China, Western architecture, music, and language would now seem as strange to us as they do to the people of that land. Our nation's customs, varied as they are, make us Americans of one sort or another.

Everyone needs a stimulating social climate. This is one of the chief arguments for good schools, good books, and good standards of living for all. If our associates are dull inferiors, we suffer mentally and socially. The better our friends are, the better we shall be. Some communities produce many geniuses; others produce few. Some communities produce many criminals; others produce few. We should seek for ourselves the best possible social environments, for we are largely what they make us.

## 5. HOW TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENT

Most animals either accept their environment as it is or migrate to another place. Although man can also accept his environment as it is, he almost never does so. His ability to adapt himself to environment is great, but his powers of adapting his environment to himself are still greater. Man always tries to improve his environment.

The amount of this improvement depends both on the man and on the environment. The Bushman of each generation improves his environment by adapting flint, trees, and grass for his use, much as his ancestors did. On

the whole he makes but slight improvements in his surroundings. Civilized man, because of his knowledge of what other peoples have accomplished and are now doing, changes not only the environment produced by Nature but also that handed down by his ancestors. Bushman and civilized man are affected, respectively, by the making of tools, shelter, and baskets and by the discovery of steam power and the radio. In addition to these effects of doing things, civilized man receives influences of a different kind—he gets the ideas of other peoples. Through travel and other ways of studying, he gets ideas from the past, and through science, he can tell something even of the future. Such resources enable civilized man to continue the improvement of his environment.

Environment provides opportunity—the more advanced the environment, the greater the opportunity. The invention of the printing press increased the chance of every reader to get ideas of the past, present, and future—indeed of everything in the universe. The discovery of America increased man's opportunity for colonization and the development and use of the vast resources of two continents. You, too, can improve your environment by making use of inventions and discoveries.

In a similar way both your environment and your opportunity can be improved by your personal efforts. Learning to read extends your environment by means of the printed page. Learning a science opens your way to an understanding of processes which are incomprehensible mysteries to the Bushman. Scientific knowledge also enables you to control or adapt natural forces and materials to meet your needs. Even the air you breathe in your own home is affected by such knowledge. It was formerly believed that many kinds of air were unhealthful. According

to old ways of thinking, night air caused rheumatism, stale air was poisonous because it contained too much carbon dioxide and too little oxygen, and air that was heated enough for bodily comfort led to respiratory diseases. Now, thanks to the information supplied by modern hygiene, you can enjoy comfortable air, the main point being simply that the air should be kept in sufficient motion to produce the desired amount of evaporation from the exposed portions of the body.

One of the easiest ways to change your environment is by your conduct toward other people. By cultivating habits that they dislike, you can soon shut yourself off from persons who would otherwise be your friends. By cultivating desirable habits, you can open to yourself a social environment that will include almost everyone who comes into contact with you. Grouchiness costs time, energy, and money, while cheerfulness is cheap. Teachers as well as employers know this and act accordingly. They know that by being grouchy, they can stifle a bright pupil into dullness, and that by being cheerful, they can stimulate nearly all pupils to higher achievement. By taking advantage of such knowledge about social environment, everyone can improve his own situation.

Examples of similar effects are numerous. An audience affects a speaker—to get the best from him, the audience must show interest in what he says. Standards of living affect the members of a household—to get the best from a home, the members must be mentally stimulating, morally wholesome, and co-operative. Our bodies affect our mental attitudes—to get the best from our bodies, we must study ourselves and follow a proper course as to diet, sleep, activity, and temperature. Our institutions, such as communities, churches, schools, and recreations, are

organized ways of life—to get the best from them, we must give them our good will and best conduct. The scenery from our windows and highways is our heritage—to get the best from it, we must preserve what is good and beautify what is bad. Our friends are often called our fortunes—to enjoy such fortunes, we must cultivate friendships and approach our associates in a spirit of unselfishness, cordiality, and service.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. What is meant by environment?
2. In what ways are the President of the United States and the king of England a part of your environment?
3. Compare your own heredity and environment with Theodore Roosevelt's.
4. Debate: Environment is more important than heredity.
5. What is meant by keeping environment and heredity well balanced?
6. How does your geographical environment affect the following: your food supply, your health, your interest in athletics, your clothing, your prospect of going to college, your choice of a vocation?
7. Why is no one a self-made man?
8. (a) What points should be observed in planning a person's social climate? (b) What changes in social climate would you advise for any "spoiled child" whom you know?
9. Try to find an opposite for the word *provincial*. What differences in environment seem to cause provincialism and its opposite?
10. Describe the ways in which a recent motion picture seemed to affect the attitudes of different people of different ages.
11. Make a list of twenty kinds of environment that influence



yourself. Compare your list with those of your classmates. (If your list contains intimate items, you may wish to compare it informally with the lists of your most intimate friends when you have time for a long talk.)

12. Has your community ever produced a genius or a near-genius? To what extent do you think that your local environment is responsible for this condition?

13. How can your local environment be improved?

14. In what sense are other people's attitudes a part of your environment?

15. Your success can be either stifled or stimulated by environment. Name two environmental forces that tend to stifle success and two that stimulate it. How does each of these forces affect people? How can the undesirable forces be decreased and the desirable forces increased?

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## CHAPTER III

# Your Equipment for Successful Living

### I. MAN'S STRUCTURE AS A BASIS FOR HUMAN LIVING

A MECHANIC can make a machine that will walk erect, turn right or left, and wave its arms. He can make this machine jump when it "hears" a loud noise or lie down to "rest." If the mechanic includes the proper gadgets, his machine can speak, sing, add, subtract, open doors, and blink its eyes. Such a machine is so like a man that we may regard it as *almost* human. But the mechanic can take his machine apart, boil it in oil, and then put it together again with no bad effects on its "abilities."

The mechanic is like his machine. He can do everything that has just been mentioned. But the mechanic is, at the same time, unlike his machine. He could plan a factory that would produce a hundred machines a day. Without the addition of one extra gadget, he can turn a somersault, spell his name backward, or whistle like a bobwhite. He cannot be taken apart, boiled, and put together again without injury to himself. And so we regard the mechanic as *entirely* human.

Some of the reasons why the mechanic is more resourceful than his machine are due to man's structure. A few of the essential characteristics of his structure will be discussed in the following pages. Since many of man's actions are somewhat like those of a machine, we should expect

him to have a structure that resembles, at least slightly, that of certain machines. We should not be surprised to find similarities also to the structures of plants and animals. Indeed if a few changes were made in the following description of man's composition, it could be applied directly to describe a machine, a plant, or an animal.

There are so many ways of thinking about the mechanic's body or the body of any other human being that we usually lose ourselves when we try to describe it. For centuries scholars have spent their lives trying to explain man completely. No one has ever done so, even to his own satisfaction. But the necessity of understanding ourselves drives us to discover whatever we possibly can about our bodies.

(1) *The human structure contains chemical elements.* Modern science describes our bodies in a way that is definite and within our grasp. In an elementary school text in physiology, we can read the scientist's description. There we are told that the human body contains enough water for a small washing, enough iron to make so many tenpenny nails, a shaker of salt, a cake of calcium, a bit of iodine, and so on. We know that although this description may be accurate, it tells but little about dealing with ourselves or anyone else. Such information, taken by itself, does not make us any better as salesmen, mechanics, radio operators, engineers, or anything else that we wish to be.

(2) *Chemical elements are active.* Modern science, in trying to help us, goes far beyond this simple analysis of man. To follow on with the description, we must analyze the iron, calcium, and other substances of the body. This analysis carries us as far as science has gone toward finding a physical basis for human action. Each of our body substances, we are told, contains billions of small particles called

atoms. Each atom is a tiny world of movement. Inside each atom there is action, some of which goes on regularly all the time, while other action seems to proceed only a part of the time, according to what is happening outside the atom. Besides, the atoms are constantly dancing and flying about, knocking against their neighbor atoms. These two kinds of action, first, inside the single atom and, second, among the many atoms, are the very foundation of all the action in the universe, as well as in our bodies. Beyond such actions, science has not yet explored. Therefore until science makes further discoveries, we must build our world of human action on these small but significant actions of atoms. At least this analysis of bodily substances is worth making, for it shows that from our birth we are bundles of energetic, moving particles ready for direction and training.

(3) *The mixing of certain elements produces new qualities.* Our understanding of the physical basis of action can be improved if we take one further step with science. Let us examine, then, the results of mixing certain elements together, remembering, of course, that each element consists of tiny atomic worlds. If two elements, oxygen and hydrogen, are combined in the proper quantities, a new substance called water is produced. This new substance, as we experience it, has qualities of its own—qualities that are unlike those of either of its components when experienced alone: The water is wet and heavy and different from both hydrogen and oxygen. These new qualities, it is true, depend on the original elements that form the new substance, but the combination of the elements leads to a novel result for us: We experience new and peculiar qualities in the new compound. New qualities that arise from combining materials are called *emergent qualities*, because

they emerge, or come out, only when certain combinations occur. The whole process by which things combine and produce qualities different from those they originally possessed, is called "emergence."

Such emergence is an everyday affair: The idea is not nearly so difficult as it sounds. Take the making of fudge, for example. Fudge consists of sugar, milk, butter, chocolate, salt, and perhaps other ingredients. They are put together and after being heated, form what we call fudge. The experiencing of fudge as a combination, however, is different from the experiencing of the same amount of materials if they are eaten separately. The new substance has new qualities. Therefore we say that fudge is an emergent. Furthermore the amount of each ingredient used makes a difference. So we say that the nature of an emergent depends both on the kinds of elements that are put together and also on the amount of each.

(4) *Protoplasm, the basis of all life, is one of the most complicated mixtures of elements.* Protoplasm is found only in living organisms. No one knows all there is to know about this fascinating substance, but we are familiar enough with its qualities to see its close relation to living and learning. All traits and activities, even character and personality, depend on the nature of protoplasm.

Protoplasm exists in various shapes and forms. In its simplest condition it appears as a clear, jellylike substance found, for example, in the little one-celled animal known as the amoeba. But what wonderful jelly it is! Even in this lowest form, there are found the characteristics on which the marvelous variety of man's behavior depends. We shall now discuss some of the characteristics of protoplasm and some of the things that it can do.

First, protoplasm is *sensitive* or irritable. At first glance,



“WONDERFUL JELLY”

this may not seem to be a remarkable trait for anything to have. But it is. The quality of *being sensitive* is what makes learning possible. Even the little amoeba, floating around in its drop of water, responds to outside stimulation. Its behavior is due to the sensitive structure of its protoplasm. Touch the amoeba with the point of a needle and it moves uncomfortably, so to speak. Its movement is due partly to external pressure, just as a lifeless rock would “move” if you pushed it; but the amoeba’s movement is due also to an internal response, just as yours would be if you were prodded with the point of a needle.

Second, protoplasm is *conductive*. When it is stimulated externally, it carries or conducts its sensations to its internal parts. How do we know this? Well, of course, we have to judge indirectly; you and I are not able to read the “mind” of the amoeba and to ask if it felt the point of our needle. But when an animal acts to avoid a stimulus, it is reasonable to believe that attention of some kind has been paid to the stimulus, and that the action is prompted by an internal response. Mere awareness of the external stimulation is unlikely to result in response to it. Messages must be carried within the organism to some sort of responding or acting mechanism, like arms or legs. In human beings the conductivity of protoplasm is shown by the nerves, which act as conductors or connections between the sense organs (such as the eye and ear) and the muscles which perform the action.

Third, protoplasm can be changed—it is *changeable*. An obvious example of this is the change that takes place in a person as he grows older. The elderly person is composed of protoplasm just as the baby is. But this protoplasm has changed, at least in outward appearance. Modifications of protoplasm may be either “good” or “bad” for us. The



development of cancer, for instance, is a change of protoplasm in which certain cells seem to "run wild." This modification is harmful, of course, to the person of whom the cells are a part. The amount of change that protoplasm can undergo is amazing. For example by taking small doses of such a poison as strychnine, a person can become used to its poisonous effect; that is, his body or protoplasm gradually learns to overcome it until he is able to eat as much strychnine as would kill almost instantly a person who has not undergone the training process. This adaptation is due to the modifiable nature of protoplasm. In exactly the same way, learning also is due to the ease with which protoplasm lends itself to change. We shall see in later chapters that certain complex human traits, such as personality and character, also depend on this modifiable nature of human protoplasm.

Fourth, protoplasm is *self-reproducing*. One universal characteristic of reproduction is that the offspring is similar to its parents. Therefore if we know the characteristics of the parent, it is reasonable to assume that we shall find somewhat the same characteristics in the next generation. This is a most significant point to remember in later discussions. For example poisonous snakes reproduce poisonous snakes. Consider how disturbing it would be if harmless snakes were suddenly to start producing poisonous ones. The children of each race have the characteristics of that race; it would be rather startling, to say the least, for Japanese suddenly to begin having golden-haired children. These illustrations make clear the important point that protoplasm not only reproduces itself, but reproduces itself according to its kind.

Fifth, protoplasm is *active*. Generally speaking, the action is of two kinds: (1) the motion of individual cells, and

(2) the motion of groups of cells or organisms. The movement of the individual cell varies according to its own structure and its locality within the organism. The motion of groups of cells is infinite in variety. Viewing organisms as a whole, one can see readily that the power of motion is of vital importance. Take the matter of food, for instance. Certain animals are forced to stay in one place and catch what food comes along, but they die when the food supply diminishes or disappears. Other animals which are able to move around in the world, however, find something to eat and thus survive. Not only that, but by changing their environment through their motions, they undergo a process of education.

(5) *Man is the most complicated emergent.* Man himself is an emergent: From birth to the end of life, he is the most complex emergent in the world. His structure is more complicated, flexible, and responsive than that of any other living thing. Man develops slowly as compared with a machine or an animal. He adapts and readapts himself to new conditions throughout his life. Every time that any change occurs in his body, he is, to some extent, a new emergent.

We have seen that the action of atoms and protoplasm depends on their surroundings. We know that food, after it is eaten, enters the blood stream. This, then, affects the action of the atoms of the body and produces a new emergent. Other physical effects are produced by heat and cold, which give rise to still other emergent qualities. Every time we move a muscle we change certain atoms into lactic acid, a chemical which refreshes our nerves. While all these changes go on, our bodies seem to be so organized that a balancing process brings us back to what is called normal.

In this section we began by comparing an *almost* human machine with an *entirely* human mechanic. Next we gave a brief description of the contents of the human body, but found that this general description told us little about dealing with ourselves. We learned that science has discovered actions both inside and outside each of the atoms of the body. This step in our analysis gave us a basis for human activity. Another step enabled us to see that man is the chief of all emergents and that his physical qualities are the result of both the kind and the amount of his bodily elements. Finally we found that man's body is constantly emerging because his conditions are constantly changing, while a balancing process maintains general normality. His structure may contain no substances that are absent from certain other organisms, but it is organized in a more complicated, flexible, and responsive fashion than that of any other being. His structure enables man to postpone his maturity; in short, it enables him to adapt and readapt himself to new conditions throughout his life.

## 2. HOW OUR STRUCTURE AFFECTS OUR CONDUCT

Human beings do not acquire their complex ways of life accidentally. They are born with definite equipment for complex activities. They differ among themselves in this equipment, as you will see presently when you read Chapter VII, which deals with our differences. They differ also in the surroundings to which they are exposed. But all normal people are born with a basic physical equipment, the nature of which all of us should know, not as well, perhaps, as the physician knows it, but well enough to see how physical structure affects our own actions and those of other people.

Roughly speaking, man's physical equipment for conduct consists of three general parts: (1) a system of sense organs admitting impressions from the outside world; (2) an internal system of connections between the sense organs and the parts of the body that react or respond; and (3) a system of reacting mechanisms, both external and internal.

Sense organs, such as the eye and ear, are especially adapted to receive mechanical and chemical stimulation. Some sense organs are on the surface of the body. Others are within the body, on the lining of the digestive organs, and so on. Still others are buried within the muscles.

The connective system between the sense organs and the reacting mechanisms is composed of nerves. Nerves are of various kinds, but they all have one main function: to stimulate the body to act. Besides stimulating action, the nervous system co-ordinates action.

Reacting mechanisms are of three kinds: (1) muscles, (2) glands, and (3) brain cells. Muscular action needs no description here, for we observe it daily. Glands are of two kinds: duct glands, such as the tear gland, and ductless glands, such as the thyroid. A duct is a tube. When a duct gland acts, a tube carries its secretion to a surface of the body. Ductless glands pour their secretions directly into the blood stream. The ductless glands affect one's emotions and temperament, but one can learn to control them partially.

Some stimulation leads to action that is unseen, although it is as real as any other behavior. This "covered" (or sometimes we call it "covert") action is usually that of brain cells. It occurs when a person thinks. Just what else then occurs, if anything, no one seems to know.

## 3. MAN AS A MACHINE

We sometimes hear people speak as though human beings were in some mysterious way exempted from the ordinary laws of Nature. We hear it said that man has overcome the law of gravity, because he is able to leave the earth and fly in the air. If we consider such statements seriously, we shall find them all untrue. Man only *seems* to be free from natural law; his ability to "defy" such a law as that of gravity is due to discoveries and inventions that enable him to offset it, but not to attain any real exemption from it.

For many ordinary purposes of human action, man's body is a machine. As a machine, his body is subject to the principles that govern the operation of all machines. In using his arms for lifting, he is limited in the amount he can raise, by the formula based upon length of arm, strength of bone and muscle, and so on. Simple as this principle may seem to us when it is considered offhand, people often disregard it completely. For example we find individuals who believe that any child is able to do as well in his school subjects as any other child. This statement is obviously false, for it disregards our individual differences. To do anything, we must have a physical apparatus that is fit for the task. When the apparatus is unfit, the performance is poor or completely impossible. In determining our own life's ambitions and in guiding ourselves toward a successful life career, we should have well in mind many of the machinelike characteristics needed for success in various fields. We should know, in particular, the ones required by the vocation that we plan to enter, in which of them we are well equipped, and in

which we are deficient. The following is a list of certain structures and uses of the body-machine in regard to which every person should know his own fitness:

1. The ease and accuracy with which one sees or hears
2. The speed at which the necessary body processes, such as metabolism, occur
3. Reflex time, or the speed of reaction
4. Condition of the vital organs, especially the heart and lungs
5. Emotional stability
6. Mechanical strength
7. Immunity to disease
8. Weight in relation to age and height
9. Glandular balance and condition
10. Condition of nerves, tendency to nervousness, and so on
11. Voice apparatus
12. Special defects or disabilities, and special abilities

This is not a complete statement of bodily equipment. It is merely a practical check list for a person to use upon himself as he approaches the time when he must make his own final decision about a career. Interest has much to do with one's success, but interest cannot make up for too great disabilities in mechanical equipment. If a person is only slightly deficient in some of the mechanical equipment needed in an attractive occupation, he may go ahead safely, for his interest may make him work hard enough to offset the obstacle. But if he is seriously handicapped, he should seek another occupation. A few succeed against great odds; many fail. The odds are against anyone who enters an occupation for which his physical organism is not well fitted: Social custom as well as Nature stands in his way.

#### 4. MAN'S UNIQUE ORGANISM

When we say that man is like a machine in some ways, we do not mean that he acts entirely like a machine in any one respect. Although his body often behaves mechanically, its action always differs from that of even a complicated machine. The organism or body of man is *unique*; that is, there is no other organism like his. Man's body consists of living protoplasm, which gives him the unique ability to conserve or store away his experience, whatever it is, and to tell it in words to his fellow men. No machine can do this. A talking machine can reproduce the words that it "hears," but it cannot go hunting and later tell its fellow machines about the scenery in the forest.

In addition to conserving his experience, man can modify his later conduct in the light of previous experience. In a limited way, many lifeless objects can do a part of this conserving, but not in the sense that man does it. For example if a piece of paper is folded so that it is creased, the paper conserves the crease. If a man is acted upon until a "crease" is made, we call the "crease" a habit. But the man has far greater powers than the paper. His structure enables him to tell about the habit, practice it, or change it. He can select certain parts of his total experience and put them together in a way that is different from any of his original experiences. He does this whenever he solves a problem: He picks out of his experience the parts that seem to apply to the problem, fits them together into a trial solution, tests the solution, and if it is effective, he adopts it. After that he can state his solution in words. Meanwhile the paper merely retains its crease.

As errors often creep into man's attempts to use his

experience, his method is sometimes called a trial-and-error process. Apes also practice trial-and-error processes and they, like man, sometimes succeed. But man has a structure that enables him to write about his trials and errors, and if he succeeds, about his successes. His descendants need not repeat his failures. The successes of one generation can be preserved for all time. His descendants can use their own structures intelligently by studying his experience. This is what happened when William Harvey discovered that blood circulates through the body. People nowadays do not have to make the discovery again; they simply begin where Harvey finished. Meanwhile the apes of future generations must each begin afresh with the same old trials and errors and infrequent successes.

Let us drop to a lower level of activity and observe a man trying to locate a building that he has seen but once. In this situation, a horse or an elephant might do better. But if the man finds the building, he can use other parts of his bodily structure and write to a friend halfway around the world. Then his friend, with mathematical exactness, can locate the building on a map of the world—in case he should wish to find it. Without this ability, Jim's companions could never have found Treasure Island. Thus man conquers both space and time, so that anyone at any time can locate the building that our man found. Meanwhile the structures of the horse and the elephant compel them to carry their knowledge, as a secret, to their graves.

If we drop still lower, we can see man appeasing his hunger with distasteful roots and berries. We can see bears in a forest doing about the same thing. But man does not remain dissatisfied with his food; he builds a fire and boils



his roots and berries, adding a white, savory substance to the roots, and some honey to the berries. He is able also to remember this process and he can write a book of instructions for others who wish to follow the same method. Then he combines forms of energy to produce something that he likes, just as in the making of fudge. Meanwhile the bears gingerly eat the roots and berries as Nature grows them.

The unique distinction of man's organism is that *only man puts together the experiences of his ancestors*. The experience of ancestors is closed to animals, even to bridgebuilding beavers. We may say that man vanquishes time by conserving the past, thus acquiring the power to use the earlier lessons of the human race in his present and future plans. Animals remember their experiences, as has been stated, but they remember and use only the experiences of their own lives. Moreover man can use the experiences of other men of his own time, no matter whether they are at the South Pole or in central Africa—for man has also vanquished space better than any animal, thanks to the superiority of his unique structure.

Versatility, the ability to do more things in more ways, is another distinction of man. Both animals and plants are able to put together forms of energy. If, however, certain forms of energy are absent from the soil where a plant happens to grow, the plant dies, because it cannot move. It is limited in its search for energy. Animals can move from place to place in search of the energy that is stored in roots and berries. As energy-seekers, then, animals are more versatile than plants. But man shows even greater versatility when he flavors his food with salt or honey. If man discovers that his own body is not running smoothly

on certain forms of energy, he can add iron or iodine or some other form of energy to his diet. He is, in all, more versatile in using forms of energy than any plant or animal.

Man can "vegetate" nearly like a plant. He can conquer space nearly like an animal. But he can also conserve experience, unlike either a plant or an animal. Some men—gluttons—spend their lives chiefly in energy-building by eating; they are really plant-men. Other men—moving restlessly from place to place without responsibility or thought of the future—are chiefly migratory, and in this respect resemble animals. But most normal human beings are conservers and users of experience. If man has any responsibility, other than that which comes from religion, it is the responsibility for conserving experience. Only those who know the past and plan the future live like human beings; only they are using their organisms effectively.

Summarizing, then, we may say that man, when he uses his structural resources, is removed so far from either a machine or an animal that he must always be called human. He cannot cope in all ways with animals, plants, or even with machines; but in the respects that make him human, no other organism and no machine can cope with him. Hereafter, as you will see, we shall guard as carefully against calling man an animal as we do against calling him a machine or a vegetable. Man's organism is in a class by itself. It is distinguished by its capacity for preserving and transmitting his experiences to other men. Man is able to begin where his ancestors have finished, or still better, he can continue from the point at which his best fellow men have arrived. Our problem is that of adjusting this unique organism for effective action in the new social world that man is building.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. See if you can find a statement of the commercial value in dollars and cents of the elements in the human body. (Hint: Try high school physiology texts and general science books.)

2. Why, aside from neglecting the religious nature of man, is the strictly chemical description of a human being only partially complete?

3. Give several examples of emergents other than fudge. Show how a change in the number of elements of an emergent may change its nature. Do the same for a change in the proportions of the elements.

4. Try to name something else that a person should know about his physical equipment in addition to the items on page 42. How does each of the items affect a person's social life?

5. Why is it possible for interest in one's work to make up for a slight lack in ability? Explain.

6. Can you name any other characteristics of protoplasm than those in the text? See if your classmates or teacher can.

7. Try to account for the tendency to refer to man as an animal.

8. What differences in structure separate man most sharply from animals?

9. To what extent can man live like a plant or an animal?

10. (a) What conduct separates man most sharply from animals? (b) How is this conduct related to man's physical structure?

### *Further Reading*

Campbell, Charles M., *Human Personality and the Environment* (The Macmillan Company, 1934). Chapters I-II.

Hoisington, L. B., *Psychology: An Elementary Text* (The Macmillan Company, 1935). Chapter V.

Köhler, Wolfgang, *The Mentality of Apes* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927).

## CHAPTER IV

# Special Guides to Successful Living

### I. THREE LIFE SCENES

THE lawns are green and well kept. Overhead the sky is blue and the sun is shining brightly. Scattered about, working at their daily tasks, are the inmates of this home for the mentally sick—inmates, called by their fellow men “crazy.” The main building, a magnificent structure of brown brick covered with clinging ivy, stands in a pleasant grove. Soon, however, the peace is interrupted by a noise of brakes and horns; several automobiles come to a halt in the driveway, and out of them hurries a group of young people, obviously students. With a bookish-appearing man as leader, they approach the building and are met on the steps by one of the attending physicians. As the leader, who is a professor, chats with the physician, one of the students, a rather breezy young chap, strolls over to an inmate working quietly at a flower bed a little to the side, and asks in a condescending tone, “Tell me, my good man, why are you here?” The man at work on the garden slowly looks up and with just the trace of a smile, replies, “Because, my dear sir, there are more people in the world like you than like me.”

Another scene. It is 1929 in Wall Street, New York City—that wild 1929 when big piles of money shrank overnight into little ones and little ones vanished. Far up on the

fiftieth floor of one of those towering gray giants, the skyscrapers, there sits, in a beautifully furnished office, a smartly dressed man of middle age. Over the index finger of his well-kept right hand the ticker tape flows in a slender white stream. It must tell a disheartening story, for the man's expression alternates between irritation and discouragement. The telephone rings. After raising the receiver and acknowledging the call, the man says, "No, I can't do it. I've converted everything—everything, I tell you. If she goes down another point I'm wiped out!" He turns back and follows again the ceaseless flow of the white ribbon. Too soon it tells its fateful story. That well-manicured right hand strays to the drawer of the desk, and blue steel gleams briefly as it is transferred from drawer to pocket. The man arises and walks quickly to the door of a side room near by. Soon a staccato shot punctures the dull hum of traffic from below. Next day the headlines scream.

Another scene. Here is a banquet table laden with fine food and surrounded by guests who are chatting merrily. Various signs in the room indicate that the scene is in the United States of America. One guest, although dressed like the others, seems to be eating in a somewhat different fashion. Most of the diners cut off a little piece of meat, transfer the fork from the left hand to the right, eat the piece of meat which has been cut off, and perhaps follow it with a bit of vegetable or potato. Not so our friend. He cuts off a small square of meat, turns his fork over in his left hand, pierces the meat, and piles upon it several layers of potato and vegetable, using the meat as a foundation and the fork as a side support. He then elevates the whole structure and deposits the food in his mouth. After watching him with intent amusement for a few moments,

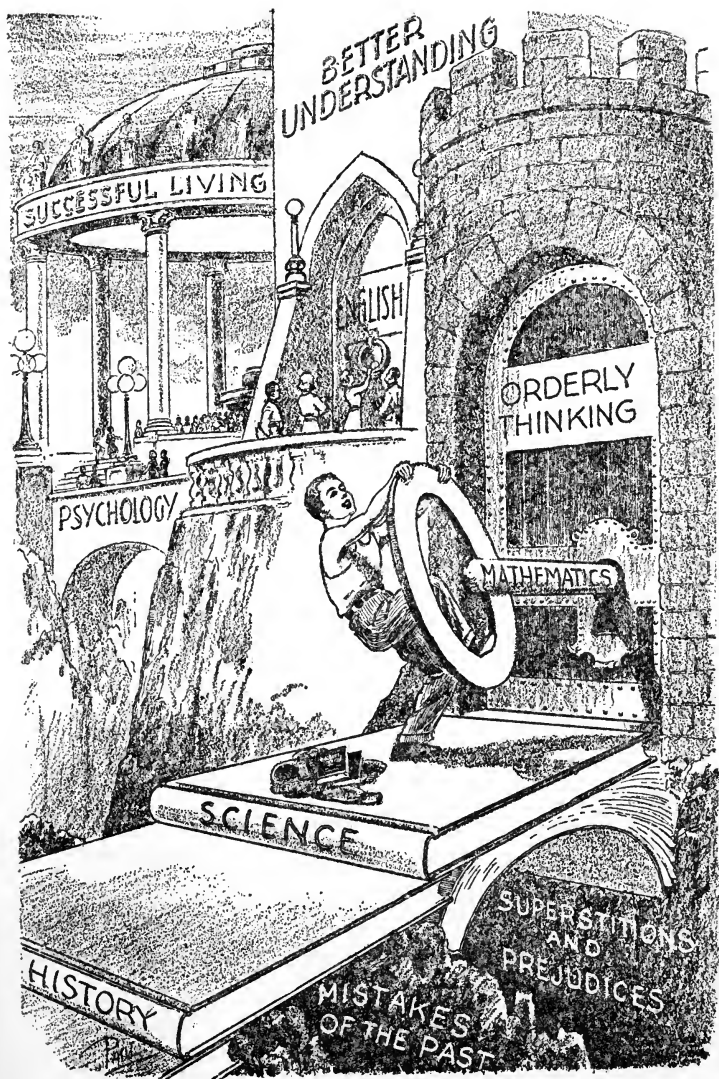
an impressionable young lady at the table can restrain herself no longer, and turning to her escort, says, "Oh Jack, look at that terrible person across the table and down a little way. How can anybody possibly eat in such an awful manner?" Jack's answer is simple. "I don't believe that he is such a terrible man, dear, but he is a Canadian, and that manner of handling food is regarded as perfectly proper in some parts of Canada."

These three illustrations indicate three different kinds of failure to adjust to the world in which one is living. The man called "crazy" had no desire to do away with himself, and his keen response to an impolite student left that student without a reply. Yet he had been so poorly adjusted that society had confined him in an institution. The ruined stockbroker would have been horrified in 1928 had he been asked to change places with the man in the asylum. But less than a year later the stockbroker was in a tragic grave, while the unadjusted man went quietly about his gardening, happy at least part of the time. The guest with the "strange" eating habits seemed strange only to a provincial and self-styled sophisticate.

Just as there are many more kinds of bad adjustment than the three that have been described, so are there many kinds of good adjustment. The quality of your adjustment depends on your knowledge and your use of guides to living. Since the school plays a leading part in adjustment, both personal and social, we shall consider it first among the guides to living.

## 2. GUIDANCE THROUGH SCHOOL STUDIES

School studies include material drawn from thousands of years of human experience. Every year the printed



GUIDES TO SUCCESS

record of this experience is increased and adapted to the needs of the day. You, today, have a much better chance of understanding the world and getting along in it in a healthy, happy fashion than the pupils of a hundred or a thousand years ago. Pupils who follow you in a hundred or a thousand years will, in turn, have the same advantage over you which you have over those of the past. This is because man's useful knowledge about the world is continually increasing. Knowledge used to be handed down by word of mouth and preserved only by memory from one generation to another. Now it is usually handed down in the form of books—some studied in school, others found in libraries and elsewhere. Let us speak briefly of some of the subjects that are studied as special guides to successful living.

*History* is the recorded biography of the human race. It is interesting because it tells what other people in other times and places have done and thought. It is valuable as a guide because it contains clues that help us to act successfully and avoid the mistakes of the past. Sometimes we say that history repeats itself and that by carefully studying the past, we can better understand the present and forecast the future. This is partly true. In this way history is like our own personal experience—it sheds light on our present and future.

*Mathematics* is a key to accuracy. By means of it the world is measured and recorded. It would be unfortunate, indeed, if our only knowledge of the world were found in general ideas which could not be described in definite terms. Mathematics, being probably the most exact of sciences, teaches us attitudes of precision and helps us to form habits of orderly thinking. Furthermore mathematics has definite significance in the everyday affairs of life. Many



of our problems are like mathematical ones in form—we know or assume certain conditions and then we proceed step by step, judging our way until we reach a conclusion. It is impossible for an engineer to build a bridge without mathematical formulas by which he can compute the strength necessary in the steel girders. The same is true of many other affairs. All through our lives we have use for mathematics.

*English* is another guide to living, for English is the study of our own language. We use language when we think. For complex thought, we must master the complexities of language. Besides, language is the chief means of communication among human beings. Have you ever stopped to think how handicapped you would be in making your wishes and ideas clear, if you were unable to speak a language? Think of a young child or a foreigner who cannot talk our language. Notice how clumsy he is in making himself understood. Self-adjustment to the world depends on our ability to speak our language effectively.

*Foreign languages* are other subjects that help to guide our lives. We study foreign languages to learn how other people express their ideas and how their expressions differ from our own. A foreign language may also give us an insight into the nature of other lands and peoples. Many English words are derived from foreign words, and so the study of another language helps us to understand our own.

*Science* adds to our knowledge of the world. Among the most valuable sciences are chemistry, physics, geology, geography, botany, and zoology. Science gathers and reports exact facts about the universe, using, for these purposes, mathematics and other tools of measurement. The scientist himself is precise and painstaking in his work, truthful and accurate. He records his material so that it

can be read and understood by other scientists, who may check his work if there is a question about its accuracy or about his conclusions. Sciences like medicine reduce the amount of human want and suffering and make life happier; others like physics lay the foundations for industrial inventions. Through science, man has made useful advances in many fields.

*Physical education* increases our ability to keep ourselves fit. It has been proved that our mental alertness is partly the result of our keeping in physical trim. We must have the best knowledge, therefore, about the care of our bodies. Besides, physical education includes activities that are socially valuable and enjoyable throughout life.

*Art* and *music* represent efforts of the human race to express itself in beautiful form. They help us in our social life by supplying ways of communicating with and understanding one another. In musical activities, people learn to work and play together. Indeed these subjects are often called universal languages, because everyone can use them. We study, in addition, the practical arts, such as home economics, manual arts, and so on. These arts guide us by helping us to make our homes more livable and by increasing our manual skill.

You will notice that all the above subjects concern people—all are guides to living. None of them, however, with the possible exception of history, deals *directly* with people. Chemistry is partly about people, because people contain chemical elements. But the study of chemistry will not tell you why you sometimes do not like to go to school or why you want to own an automobile. Mathematics, likewise, may be concerned with people—when, for example, you measure someone's height. But the study of mathematics will not tell you why you are lonesome when

you are away from home. There is a study, however, which is concerned *directly* with people, with *you* as an individual. This study helps explain why you are the sort of person that you are. It examines the ways in which people differ from animals. It tells about things that human beings can do and the ways in which they can do them best. This study is called *psychology*, and its values repay everyone who pursues it.

*Psychology can be defined as the study of what we do and how and why we do it.* It is valuable and practical and is used constantly in the business world. If you expect to become a salesman, you will want to study the psychology of salesmanship, which tells what people want to buy, why they want to buy it, and most important of all, how to make them buy. Or if you are a consumer, psychology will help you to judge the salesman and his goods and to decide wisely about buying what he offers. Psychology is related to every study mentioned above. It runs through history, mathematics, English, foreign languages, science, physical education, the arts, and all other human pursuits.

The more complex society is, the more important it becomes to understand the psychology of human conduct and action. For as society grows more complex, human relations grow increasingly difficult, and the person who is to get along well must understand other people and why they act as they do. This you can observe in a football game. Football players realize how useful it is to figure out what play the other team is going to use, and if they can do so, they have information to help them organize a better defense. Again, we should understand the kinds of actions that make people angry, for when a person is angry with us, he may injure us. All these problems, and many more, psychology studies and attempts to solve.

Hence it is a valuable guide in our social and personal adjustment.

### 3. PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOR AS A GUIDE

When we examine our world and observe different peoples, we notice that their actions vary, not only from time to time in the same place but also from place to place at the same time. We see, for example, that a custom which is perfectly acceptable to one people, such as the killing of a certain animal for food, is forbidden and punished severely among another people. We notice that types of clothing differ over the face of the earth, according to the severity of the climate and also according to the customs of individuals and groups. For instance Turkish women used to be forbidden to appear in public without veils. In some parts of the world, to shake hands with an acquaintance is regarded as an insult. Many customs which seem at first glance to be without reason can be classified in ways that are helpful to us, both in understanding other people's actions and in adjusting ourselves to our present environment or to any new environment.

*Social psychology is the study of the principles and causes of group action.* For example if you are a prospective automobile buyer and I am a salesman attempting to sell you a car, I have a problem in individual psychology, for I am dealing with only one individual. If, however, I am the captain of a football team or the general of an army, I am attempting to influence the behavior of a number of people acting together. This is a problem of social, or group, psychology. Since we live in a world where we have to deal with individuals alone and also as members of groups, we must know how people are likely to act under both

sets of circumstances. And not only does an understanding of other people's actions help us to influence them, but also it helps us to control our own actions.

What we do is partly the result of our bodily equipment at birth, which we can do little to change. We can learn, however, to make effective or ineffective use of this equipment, and in doing so, to form habits of many kinds, all of which are guides to living. One undesirable habit is that of doing something incorrectly and asserting that we are correct, simply because we have always done it that way. For example if we are in the habit of saying *It don't*, then *It doesn't* will seem strange to us when we first try to say it. Other forms of incorrect habits are sometimes called superstitions or prejudices. These are habits of thinking. Such habits of speaking and thinking are poor guides to living because they often lead to trouble. Since many people have learned how to avoid inefficient habits, we shall lag behind in the human procession unless we avoid them, too.

Certain ways in which all people act are forced upon them. They are forced to walk upon the surface of the earth instead of flying through the air, because they have no wings. Cats and dogs also walk instead of flying, because their structure compels them to walk, while a bird's structure allows it to fly. Cats and dogs cannot invent as man can, and so they never fly. Another example is the lifting of weights. You cannot lift a five-hundred-pound weight because you simply are not built to lift that amount. So you are forced to lift only lighter weights. But the elephant is not. He can lift five hundred pounds or more, because he is built to do so. Our action depends, then, on our bodily structure, which we can do little to change in most situations. There is practical value in knowing what we

cannot do as well as what we can do in regard to these limitations upon ourselves. When we know the limits beyond which we cannot act, we can then decide what is reasonable for us. Of course people differ in the amount of physical action of which they are capable, and there are also marked differences in mental capacities.

The ways of human activity can be studied to discover whether or not conduct is crude or refined. We prefer to think that as civilization advances, action becomes more refined and less like the cave man's, which was crude and brutal. The more refined an individual's conduct is, the more difficult it is to tell how he is going to act. It might have been easy for a modern man to tell how a cave man would act, because primitive behavior was probably unguarded and obvious.

Modern man, however, tries to disguise his actions, and so the art of concealment has grown up. Sometimes disguised action can be defended; sometimes it cannot. Cheating in schoolwork, for example, is a form of cunning, but foolish, conduct. It may be called a high-level action from one standpoint, because the teacher does not always catch pupils at it; therefore we cannot say that the action is entirely crude. It is foolish, however, because few people are able to get along in the world by cheating, and once they have learned to act in this way, they have difficulty in changing to better methods. How would you like to be operated on by a surgeon who had cheated his way through medical school by copying his anatomy lesson out of a book? How would you like to be taken for an airplane ride by a pilot who had cheated his way through an aviation school? Suppose he knew just enough to get the ship off the ground, but had cheated on the lesson which told how to control the plane in a windstorm ten

thousand feet up in the air? This is not a sermon; but it is an effort to call attention to the fact that slyness or cunning in action is not always a mark of social value. Effectiveness of action depends not only on how well it is done but also on its social fitness. Society's attitude about your way of doing things must be considered.

We are not able always to tell how people feel simply from the ways in which they act. People sometimes make their behavior fit a situation rather than their own feelings. For example we cannot always tell from a person's actions whether or not he is becoming irritated—for some people can skillfully cover up all signs of their feelings. But fortunately for the keen student of human nature, few people are able completely to mask their actions, and thus in spite of themselves, they give clues to their feelings.

One division of the study of social science, therefore, is the study of the clues that show how a person either wishes or plans to act. Take the football team again as an illustration. In order that everyone on the team may know what the next play is to be, the squad has secret signals which other teams are not supposed to know. If, for example, the play is to go to the right, many players either lean to the right or look to the right or else do something that shows the opposing team which way the play is going. It is said that a famous quarterback could always tell where a play was going by watching such small movements. By noticing how people act in small ways, we can sometimes tell how they are going to act later in more important ways. You may have played the game "What Is It?" In this game one person leaves the room, while the other players decide upon an object which the "stander" is to guess. Often it is almost impossible for the players to avoid glancing toward the object. This is

a simple example of how people reveal their secrets by small clues; there are numerous important situations in real life where such hints are helpful and obvious.

#### 4. WHY PEOPLE ACT AS THEY DO

We have found that psychology is a study of what people do and how they do it. These are not the only things, however, that concern us about a person's conduct. You know that it is often easy to tell what a person is doing and how he is doing it, but you sometimes wonder *why* he is doing it. Look around yourself and study the motives that lead your friends to act as they do. By *motive* we mean the reason that leads a person to behave in a certain way. Probably you have heard a person say, "I didn't invite her to the party because I don't like her." The "why" in this action, then, is dislike or hatred. Such a feeling is called an emotion. There are many other emotions, such as love, fear, anxiety, and so on. Sometimes you hear someone say, "I don't want to do that because it isn't right." This is another type of reason why people do not do things. Because of their ideals, people will avoid doing things they may strongly desire to do. We call this a moral reason, one which is concerned with the right and wrong of an action. Again, you sometimes hear a person say, "I'm sorry that I can't go, but I'm too tired." This illustrates still another kind of reason for doing or not doing things. Being tired is an actual physical condition, and as you have already seen, physical condition affects not only how people do things but also *why* they do them. Chapter V will analyze in detail the different reasons or motives which people have for doing things.



It is enough for our discussion here to state two of the main causes of conduct. The first of these causes is found in feelings and desires that are inherited by all human beings. For example there is a general human desire to avoid pain or discomfort. This being the case, people naturally wish to eat when they are hungry, and hence they try to get food by some means or other. Sometimes if it should be difficult to get food by any means that society approves, a hungry person may steal to satisfy his hunger.

The second general explanation for the *why* of human action is found in learned or acquired reasons. Why is it that Frenchmen eat snails and Americans do not? Is it because Americans are born with a dislike for the taste of snails and Frenchmen with a liking for it? No, this is not true. The fact is merely that most Americans have not learned to like snails, while many Frenchmen have. Why does Chinese music sound odd to us? Is it because Chinese people are born with a liking for that kind of music? Again this is not the case. Chinese music sounds odd to us because we have been trained to enjoy a different type of musical scale, and furthermore our music is played on instruments that produce different kinds of sounds from those produced by Chinese instruments.

The study of why people act as they do has vast practical value. You as an individual have a natural liking for some things and a natural dislike for others. In so far as this is the case, it is difficult to do much more than to control your desires for things which may be harmful to yourself or society. But many of your actions arise from causes that you can learn to control. The excuse, "I couldn't help myself," is not valid in the many situations where your action was even partly within your control. The rea-

sons *why* people act can be classified in a fairly orderly fashion; and such a classification is a practical guide for us when we make decisions about our own actions.

## 5. INVESTIGATION AS A GUIDE TO LIVING

You may wonder how we can arrive at the results and facts and principles just referred to. The method of one who studies human beings is much like the method of a botanist, a chemist, or any other scientist. The social scientist is not a magician. He works with matter-of-fact people and situations in a matter-of-fact world. Only as his results are reliable or as they help us to get along in the world, are they valuable.

Some of the facts which social science records and classifies could be gathered at a football game, a prize fight, in a classroom, or in any other place. These facts are gathered by the *method of observation*. If you have read any Sherlock Holmes stories, you know what is meant by observation and deduction. We mean not merely the casual, careless observation that you may make as you ride downtown in an automobile or a streetcar: Such observation is not orderly and it has little value in the analysis of human behavior. You may remember that Sherlock Holmes used to say to Dr. Watson that *everyone* sees as much as the detective, but no one pays sufficiently close attention to get the meaning. When we have learned to see and get the correct meaning of what we see, then we can begin our observation.

Observation is of two sorts: external and internal. By external observation we mean the study of people's actions and other events outside the observer and the discovery of their meaning. Internal observation takes place when

you study your own feelings and actions. This is sometimes called "looking within" yourself, or introspection. Both kinds of observation are open to mistakes. As stated above, observation of other people may be inaccurate because they may disguise their feelings by their actions. Observation of our own actions and feelings is difficult because we often seem to get in our own way during the process.

The second method of investigating behavior is the *experimental method*. Using this method we so arrange a situation, with carefully controlled conditions, that we can observe certain types of behavior and draw valid conclusions respecting them. When experiments with people can be set up successfully, the experimental method is best, because in it we can control the factors of the situation and eliminate chances of error.

The third method of investigation is *measurement*. A man in New York once wished to find out whether brunettes are as emotional as blondes. He assembled a group of brunette girls and one of blonde girls, attached instruments to them to measure blood pressure, heart beat, respiration, and other signs of emotion, and questioned them to find out how they felt. Next—and we apologize, but we must finish the story—he had these girls kissed by good-looking men, and he measured the effects on the instruments. He found no difference between the blondes and brunettes in the depth and extent of their emotions. This was rather a crude experiment, but at least it was more accurate than acting on the old prejudice about complexion and disposition, and it shows the value of measurement in the investigation of behavior. If the quantity or quality that is being studied can be measured, it is always better to do so than to guess.

The general methods of social investigation, then, are

*observation, experimentation, and measurement.* Sometimes all three are used. When the situation is such that we cannot set up an experiment, we must depend on observation alone, with but little measurement. The ideal situation is one in which we can carry on an experiment by exact measurement and repeat it two or three times to check the results.

You already know that even with the help of all our studies, including psychology, it is almost impossible to forecast accurately and without failure what people will do in a given situation. But prediction of probabilities is usually possible; that is, we can find out, at least, what is *likely* to happen. We know, for example, that people who lack talent of a certain sort are likely to fail in musical performance, though sometimes people overcome handicaps by an extra amount of work or interest. We cannot predict with certainty; the best that we can do is to indicate the probabilities in any situation.

From this standpoint psychology collects facts that you can use in guiding yourself and in guiding others. Guidance is based upon psychology. For example suppose that you are interested in becoming an electrical engineer. It is not enough that you have merely the desire; you must also have definite kinds of ability. The profession demands a particular level of intelligence. It presupposes high school training, especially in mathematics. It calls for persistence. It requires money. All these things considered in combination indicate your chances of success as an electrical engineer. Before you waste time trying to become one, study yourself, or have someone else who understands the profession study you, to find out whether or not you are fitted for it.

But sometimes we are wrong; we find that there are

exceptions to our rule. Does this mean that our guides are worthless? Of course not. It is always foolish to draw general conclusions from one case. But many people do so. This is one of the first habits to learn to avoid. Should you get only one thing from your study of this entire chapter, learn that *it is unscientific to draw general conclusions from one case*. For example suppose that you happen to know a German who is a mean, tricky, dishonest, cruel person. Is it fair to conclude that all Germans are of that character? Certainly not; yet many people would do so. Suppose that you know a Swede who is not overbright. Is it right to conclude that all Swedish people are dull? Again of course not.

How is it possible to find any principles of human behavior, if so many exceptions occur? Well, in any event, it is better to know a principle that works in most situations than to be without any guiding rule whatsoever. If you wish to avoid drowning, it is valuable to know that if you go beyond your depth and cannot swim, you are likely to sink and die. The fact that there are certain lakes in the world, such as the Great Salt Lake, in which it is almost impossible to sink and drown, does not prove that the principle is useless. Secondly, principles of human behavior often enable us to detect or predict even an exception to the rule. We can thus more frequently avoid making mistakes than we now do.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. Which school subject do you believe is of most practical value to man? Do all of your friends agree with you?
2. Name one or two school subjects that are not mentioned in this chapter and tell how each of them serves as a guide to living.

3. Does *your* uncle think that you are ready to enjoy travel? When Jack Custis was seventeen, his uncle, George Washington, gave this opinion about school subjects as guides to Jack's living:

" . . . his education, from what I have understood of his improvements . . . is by no means ripe enough for a tour of travelling; not that I think his becoming a mere scholar is a desirable education for a gentleman, but I conceive a knowledge of books is the basis upon which other knowledge is to be built, and that it is men and things more than books he is to be acquainted with by travelling. At present, however well versed he may be in the principles of the Latin language (which is not to be wondered at, as he began the study of it as soon as he could speak), he is unacquainted with several of their classical authors, which might be useful to him to read. He is ignorant of the Greek (which the advantages of understanding I do not pretend to judge), knows nothing of French, which is absolutely necessary to him as a traveler; little or nothing acquainted with arithmetic, and totally ignorant of the mathematics, than which, so much of it at least as relates to surveying, nothing can be more essentially necessary to any person possessed of a large landed estate, the bounds of some part or other of which is always in controversy."

4. Look up *psychology* in an encyclopedia.

5. Study a prominent advertisement. In what ways does it use psychological appeal?

6. Here are "rules" for telling a story. How do the rules use principles mentioned in this chapter?

(1) Know the story thoroughly—rehearse it, if necessary.

(2) Stories should be told only by persons who enjoy telling them.

(3) Be sure that the story fits your listeners.

(4) If possible, tie the story to a person or a locality that is known to your listeners.

- (5) Avoid tedious preliminaries and explanations.
  - (6) Be dramatic.
  - (7) Hold the listeners in suspense until the last word of the story.
7. Give an example of the advantage of observation in the guidance of conduct.
8. State arguments for and against cheating in your school-work.
9. Are you usually correct in your guesses as to why people act as they do? Why or why not?
10. Give an example of acquired eating habits other than that of Frenchmen and snails.
11. What kinds of ability are required in a vocation to which you are attracted?

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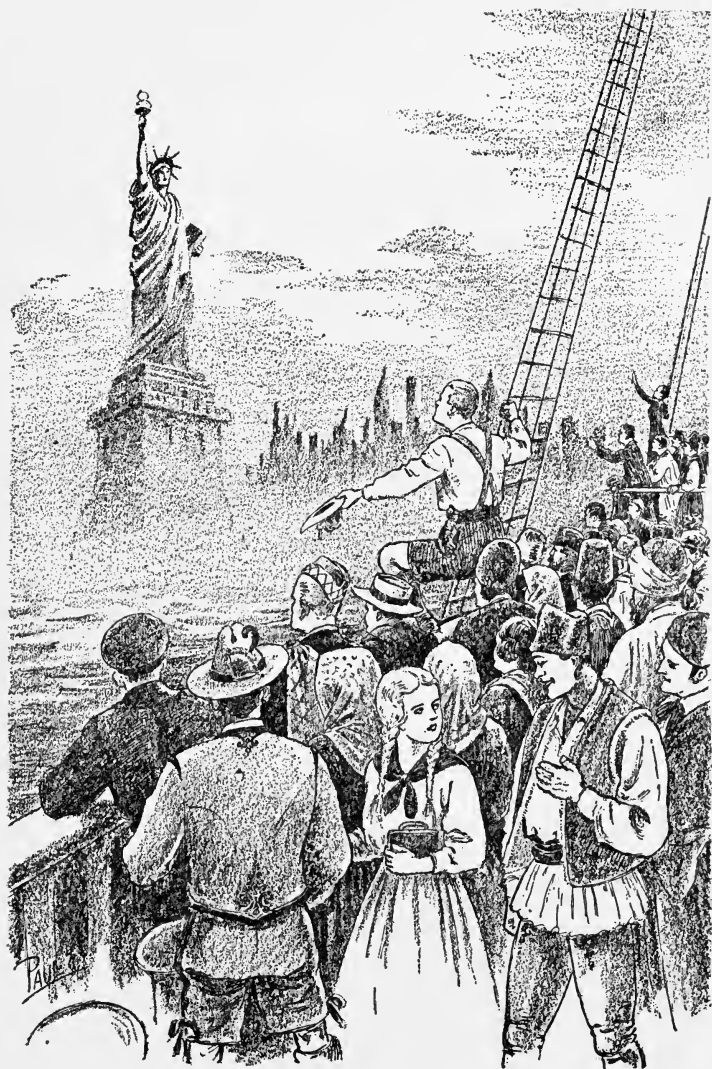


UNIT II

SOCIAL LIFE  
IN THE MODERN WORLD

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THE *Mayflower* OF TODAY

## CHAPTER V

# Why People Do Things

### I. DISCOVERING PEOPLE'S MOTIVES

A CERTAIN man is being tried for murder. His life is at stake. A jury listens to the prosecuting attorney's charge that the man is guilty. The same jury listens to the plea of the defense attorney that the man is innocent. The evidence is damaging. The accused was at the scene of the crime. He owned the weapon with which the murder was committed. Many circumstances point to his guilt, but the prosecution can establish no valid reason why he should have killed the murdered man. It can show no motive. Therefore in spite of the damaging evidence which the jury has to consider, the accused is acquitted—for evidence of definite reasons for the committing of a crime is necessary in law. Persons accused of crimes, especially of murder, are often freed because no one can show their motives.

Let us say that the accused man is clearly proved guilty. There are still several ways in which he may be treated by the law. If it can be shown, for example, that the crime was not planned, as in the case of manslaughter, then the punishment is much lighter than if the crime were premeditated. In other words not only is the criminal's motive itself important in legal judgment, but also the nature and duration of the motive. This illustration is a simple one,

but it shows clearly both the need for and the difficulty of finding out exactly why people do things.

Our everyday life furnishes us with countless cases of the need for discovering why people have acted as they have. Often our own actions will depend not so much on the absolute fact of some other person's action, as on his reason for so acting. Why did my algebra teacher give me a failing mark in algebra? Was it because he didn't like me or was it because I was actually less proficient in algebra than the rest of the class? Whether or not I shall get busy and work harder upon my algebra may depend on the answers to these questions. And they are questions of *why*, of motive.

Why is a certain friend angry with me? Is it because I have thoughtlessly offended her by doing something she does not care to mention? Or is it because she has become interested in someone else? In the former case amends can usually be made and everyone will be happy. In the latter case the situation is likely to be hopeless as far as I am concerned and had best be forgotten, if possible. Anyone beyond the age of two knows perfectly well that people do not do things in an entirely accidental or haphazard way. Even the young child realizes that human beings have schemes controlling their actions and that their conduct is not always what it seems to be on the surface. Even the young child itself has little schemes and aims that underlie and modify its own course of action. No long argument is needed to convince anyone of the gains that come from being able to appraise correctly the actions of others in terms of motives.

Fortunately you can often understand a person's motives if you are willing to study and analyze them. Such study takes time, but the understanding that comes from it more



“WHAT HAVE I DONE?”

than compensates for your effort. This is the real reason behind the old practice of "counting ten" before we speak. Time for counting gives us time for thinking. During this delay we may discover people's motives and we can then act more effectively than before. In important situations the time needed for discovering motives is often long, but this time is well spent—*delayed action is likely to be effective action.*

## 2. IMPULSES DRIVE PEOPLE OUT OF BOUNDS

The man who was accused of murder might have pleaded guilty to the crime and said, "Gentlemen of the jury, I committed the crime on impulse!" This plea would not have led to his acquittal, but probably it might have resulted in a lighter sentence. Impulse is one reason for people's actions. What is its nature?

Impulsive action has three characteristics: It is sudden, scattered, and emotionalized. Sudden action often gives too little time for thought. Scattered action is a hit-or-miss, haphazard response, as often wrong as right. Emotionalized action is prompted by our feelings, which also may be right or wrong. In describing impulse thus, we are, of course, speaking of true impulse and not planned action which only appears to be impulsive.

If we accept this description of impulse, should we or should we not use impulse as a guide to our own conduct? To answer this question let us ask three others. Is sudden action usually effective? Is scattered action usually efficient? Is highly emotionalized action usually accurate? Of course it is impossible to say *No* to these questions when they refer to certain situations. Sudden action is often

desirable and effective in a football game. Scattered action may be good if you are trying to relax and have no need for careful planning. At times, for example, when selecting items from a menu, you may as well scatter your choice as calculate the calories. Highly emotionalized action is also proper and desirable in many situations. The football coach, for instance, has no place for listless players.

But for every time that impulsive action is effective, there are many times that it is not. The person who gets along well in complex modern society is one who has cultivated the habit of refusing to act often upon impulse, except in trivial situations. You may wager a dollar upon a race horse on the basis of a "hunch," which is a form of impulse. But even a careless person would hesitate before wagering all his money on that basis. The same principle applies to all types of impulsive action.

What is the cause of impulse? There is no special mystery about it. It usually comes from something outside ourselves. Though we often have ideas which seem to have started inside, actually they are the result of something external that has not been noticed. The stimulation may start action in a certain direction, even when it is out of line with our usual aims. For example a businessman may have an impulse to write a novel. He may have read a novel that interested him in the matter, and his business may be running smoothly, requiring little of his attention. A combination of favorable circumstances, plus curiosity about what he could write, might lead to action. From this pattern many impulsive acts are cut. But the impulse should be examined before it is followed: The person who is entirely a creature of impulse is likely to be in trouble much of the time.

### 3. PEOPLE REBEL AGAINST COMPULSION

Have you ever done anything because you were told not to do it? Who has not? When we do things simply because we have been told not to, we are prompted by irritation against social interference. No one seems to know exactly why it is that people, and animals, too, often persist more strongly in their action if that action is interfered with. We know that infants object strongly to having the freedom of their movements restricted, and if the arms of a baby are held for any length of time, it will kick, cry, and show other signs of rage. Whenever action is under way, interference seems to increase our emotion. Our habits are like our actions—once started, they press us onward, and interference stirs us to resist and preserve what we call our independence.

Conflict, as well as interference, produces action. Some psychologists go so far as to say that we never think except when conflict arises. Conflict implies two or more situations tugging us in different directions at the same time. The lines of conflict, although not always directly opposed, demand a choice. It is this problem of choice, in turn, that stimulates thought.

When we say that interference or conflict produces more or less violent reaction, we have told but little of the whole story. Action may take any one of many forms. Some of these forms are impulsive and result in wild waste of energy or lead to useless activity. Let us illustrate. In every hunting season men who are unfamiliar with forests go out to get their quotas of deer. Sometimes, lacking guides, they lose their way. Being lost is a strong form of interference. It may interfere with their food supply unless they are carrying plentiful provisions. It interferes with their



hunting. It interferes with their peace of mind. Different men have reacted in different ways to such motivation. Some have rushed wildly through the wood, frequently in a circle, rapidly spending their strength. Usually after exhausting themselves, they have paid with their lives for their failure to conserve their energy. Other men, balked by the same type of interference, although as powerfully motivated to action, have proceeded differently. They have studied the situation. They have planned a course of action to get themselves out of the difficulty. Usually this course of behavior has been more successful than the impulsive and extravagant wastefulness of the hunter who acts in a thoughtless panic.

Since we are all interested in improving our own conduct, we may ask ourselves these questions: How should I react to interference? What sort of interference should I use when I am trying to stimulate someone else to action? These are practical queries and your success in social situations depends on your answers. For nothing in the world interferes with us more than society does; in fact one of our greatest problems is that of finding out how to react to society's frequent interference with our desires and plans. Society is certain to interfere, for the aims of the individual and those of the group often conflict.

How shall I react to interference? Certainly not in the scattered, ineffective way of the man who, lost in the forest, dissipated the energy that might have been used in saving himself. We must admit that when an obstacle, real or imagined, arises squarely in anyone's path, he will be tempted strongly to throw himself, vainly or otherwise, directly at that object. Frequently, however, a line of much less resistance leads to a better outcome. Immediately you may say, "Oh, take the easy way out of everything?" This

is not necessarily the best course. Often, however, several lines of action are equally commendable from the standpoint of society, religion, morals, and so forth, but they are not equally difficult; the thinking man always attempts to discover the least difficult and most effective line of action.

One must be very certain, however, that the outcome will be effective, for these statements are true only when all the ways are good. Take your schoolwork as an example. Your subjects interfere, in a way, with social pursuits, athletics, self-indulgence, and so on. Therefore you may say, "You are recommending the easiest way. Cheating is one of the ways in which marks can be secured and subjects passed. Therefore I shall cheat on the basis of your advice." But cheating does not lead to a desirable goal. Our principle has been falsely applied. You will not have the same sort of training after having cheated your way through subjects that you would have had, had you not cheated. If you desire a brief illustration of this, ask yourself again how you would like to have your appendix removed by a surgeon who had cheated his way through medical school. He might have good grades, but he would not have good training.

Therefore *in dealing with interference*, first, *seek the different solutions to the problem*. Second, if these solutions fail, *estimate the possibility of overcoming the major obstacle*. Third, *abandon the whole situation if it appears impossible*. The man who quits is not always a coward. Even a fish, when separated by a pane of glass from the minnows which it would like to eat, soon stops bumping its head against the partition.

How should I use interference to influence the action of other people? We may say, first, that all social difficulties

are caused partly by interference. Our business and industrial systems are shot through with it. The easiest way to influence some people to do something is to forbid them to do it. This is true for adults as well as for children—if a motion picture is even halfway forbidden by the sign “For Adults Only,” certain adults flock to it and many children wish to do the same. There is a sharp difference in the extent to which leading thinkers believe that such interference is necessary or desirable. Some believe that the individual should be allowed almost complete freedom; others think that the government should interfere in many places in the life of the individual and of groups of individuals.

#### 4. PEOPLE ARE NEVER SATISFIED

We shall discuss wants, desires, and wishes in a single section, because they are all related or similar. They form one of the chief groups of reasons why people do things.

Let us first consider wants. When we hear the expression, “He is in dire want,” the meaning is that the person lacks the bare necessities of life. Wants urge us to action. They are largely hereditary. Among the major human wants are these: (a) self-preservation, (b) bodily comfort and adjustment, and (c) freedom of action. These are powerful stimulants to activity.

In an advanced and cultured society, these wants do not operate continuously, but in times of stress, they sometimes become the chief reasons for action. Action that is prompted by these wants is often crude or even brutal. The man who fancies that his life is threatened is likely to act in a direct and violent manner. A starving animal or man is always more dangerous than a well-fed one. We

find recognition of this fact in the effort of the governments of all countries to protect their populations from downright hunger. When this principle has long been disregarded, and where many people have been affected, violent results have followed. This is a practical principle to apply in business and politics. Not only in church socials is it true that a man is easier to deal with when his stomach is full of chicken pie; the expensive dinners that traveling representatives of large individual concerns give their clients are not given just for the fun of it. These concerns know that a man is more likely to sign a contract when certain wants of his have been satisfied.

Although desires are related to wants, they are different in several significant ways. As we have said, wants are largely hereditary, but the word "desire," as it is often used, means something that we have acquired or learned. Desires have less driving power than wants, but are greater in number and more likely to come and go.

We sometimes hear it said that a man is the victim of his own wants and desires; the urges in his body are the driving forces of his conduct. But both environment and habit influence desires and wants, and to some extent, both are within our control. For example you have had to live in an environment set up by your parents. Your present desires are influenced by the habits that you were allowed to follow or were led to form in your early surroundings. Had you had a different environment, you might have developed different desires. Some of your present desires are also the result of your own choice. If, for example, you chose to take narcotics when you at first had no abnormal desire for them, the later terrible craving would be an outcome of your choosing. This is what we mean when we say that desires are not beyond control.

Wants, likewise, are influenced by habit and can be increased or decreased in their intensity. For instance physicians tell us that the average human being eats two or three times as much food as he needs to keep his body fit. Some people go further and become gluttons. The feeling of hunger, although it is a basic need, cannot be blamed entirely for making gluttons. In the first place not all people are gluttons. In the second place the average glutton, if he will talk about his weakness at all, admits that it comes from the habit of eating long after his basic needs have been satisfied.

Wishes grow out of partially completed actions. We often begin an action, expecting and desiring to finish it, but if the activity is blocked or interfered with, we are likely to be aroused or even annoyed, and then there follows a wish to go on with it. Start a game, for example, and when you are half through, let someone stop you. At once you have a strong feeling or emotion—you wish that you could be allowed to finish the game. Something like this happens whenever we are halted in any action we have begun. A wish, therefore, is likely to be fairly definite and directed toward finishing a course of action that we have planned or started.

Out of daydreams we get our "wishful thinking." We dream of what we could do with a million dollars—we wishfully think of palaces, luxurious cars, travel on grand ships, and so on. Within reasonable limits such wishful thinking is not particularly undesirable. But mental hygienists insist that when a person's thinking becomes chiefly wishful, his conduct is likely to be ineffective. Again, habit plays a part. We may fall into the habit of wishing for another person's property. Sometimes this leads toward resenting the other person's good fortune;

resentment leads to ill feeling, and ill feeling is likely to lead to hostility and the breaking up of friendship.

Ideals and aims are specialized forms of the wish. This is as true of religious, moral, and social ideals as of any others. Faith, as found in most religions, is partly a wish. It is barely conceivable that a person might have faith in the possibility of events which he did not desire or that he might hope for a state of affairs which he had no faith would come about. But more often the faith is increased by our wish for things which the faith is supposed to produce. The little child's faith in Santa Claus, for instance, cannot be explained entirely in terms of the simple nature of children. Their faith in Santa Claus is increased by strong feelings and emotions—desires for the things Santa Claus will bring them.

Wants are with us forever. Ideals and desires are likely to change. They often improve. This progress of our ideals is fortunate for us—as it enables us to advance in the method of satisfying our desires. If the wishes of all the little boys who have wanted to become cowboys and all the little girls who have wanted to become actresses had been fulfilled, the world would have a woeful oversupply of both. Fortunately our progress toward maturity leads to changed ideals in most of us. Therefore we are wise if we do not begin to specialize our training until we are fairly certain that our decision in regard to our vocation has been a mature and thoughtful one.

## 5. CIRCUMSTANCES FORCE PEOPLE TO ACT

We all know that we do some things because we must. Earlier in this chapter we stated that man behaves as he does partly because of his bodily structure. Bodily neces-

sity is one force that leads to action—hunger leads to eating. We shall now examine other forms of compulsion.

The force of circumstances is shown in the training of children. We can recall that, as children, we had to act in certain ways because our elders required us to do so. Our action was compelled by the force of circumstances. To some children the force of circumstances or environment becomes intolerable, and they run away from home. This is not usually a wise action, because many runaway children have found conditions elsewhere were no freer than at home.

Another form of compulsion is social pressure. Social pressure also is of several kinds. Law is one of them. Social customs and traditions are others. In a country like the United States, there is considerable reason for our willingness to obey laws, although sometimes they force us to courses of action that we should not pursue if the laws did not exist. In this country every citizen can have a part in making laws if he so desires. Although our lawmaking machinery does not work perfectly, citizens can remedy it. No one who shirks the duty of being a good citizen should criticize the forced control of his action. In many countries social pressure now restricts individual freedom vastly more than in the United States.

Where environment is truly beyond his control, the important thing for the individual is not a futile effort to evade, but rather an effort to face situations constructively. Such constructive effort is of the utmost practical value. So-called radicalism is an example of an attitude that arises in response to compulsions exerted upon individuals by an existing system. Conservatism is another type of attitude. Usually the radical is being forced to do something that he does not desire to do, and hence the compulsion is

unacceptable; and usually the conservative is doing something that he desires to do, and hence his acceptance of things as they are. Radicals themselves are of several varieties. Some wish to destroy entirely the set of circumstances that compels them to do unpleasing things. Others desire change, but seek it by gradual processes.

Something happens inside us when we are compelled to do things against our will. This internal action occurs whether the compulsion is positive or negative. Everyone probably has been tempted to an action because that very action has been prohibited. The feeling that accompanies such temptation is expressed in the saying: "Stolen fruits taste the sweetest." The person who is trying to develop social ability should disguise as well as possible the compulsion he exerts in any situation; he can then lead people to do things by skillfully forbidding them to.

Finally we ask what our own attitude should be toward responses which are forced by circumstances. Disregarding cataclysms like earthquakes, and events in which a person is quite unable to change his responses, we may say that the reasoning man attempts to adjust his conduct to circumstance as well as possible. Improvement of the general state of affairs is just as likely to be found in self-analysis as in zealous attempts to remove the forcing circumstances.

## 6. TALENT LEADS TO SELF-EXPRESSION

One reason why we do things is that we are "good" at them. Being "good" at something is sometimes called having a talent for it. It is easy to see that talent is a strong motivator. Talent makes performance not only easy but also effective. Things at which we excel easily are likely to



give us satisfaction; this, in turn, may provide a further motive to continue the activity.

Since talent makes efficient performance easier and since success generates interest that leads to further success, the discovery of talent is and should be an aim of every person. Part of the responsibility for the discovery of talent rests with parents and schools. Part of the responsibility rests, however, with each individual. One of the best ways to discover one's talent is to engage in a variety of activities. This need not lead one to become a jack-of-all-trades for a life vocation. It does mean, however, that during our schooldays, while we still have considerable freedom, we should explore our capabilities by trying out several subjects or activities.

## 7. MONEY MAKES PEOPLE WORK

For a correct description of why many people do things, money should have been placed first, though, by rights, it ought not to belong there. It must be in the list, however, because it affects the lives of us all.

Everyone knows that money of itself means nothing, but that what it will do means much. In the best sense our money is evidence of an accomplishment or thought or work of our own. As such it is desirable. Money can also secure for us the products or services of others. The memory of the effort expended in securing money should make us careful in its expenditure. But because money enables people to fulfill their wishes and because it can be obtained without due effort, it has become the source of much evil. Critics of our country say that we have forgotten that money, if it is to mean anything in the long run, must be worked for, and that we have the delusion that money can

create money. Perhaps this criticism is correct. In so far as it is true, we should make an effort to change conditions. For money as a reason for action is good or evil, depending on our theory about it. If we view money as simply something to be secured by any means at all, then it is logical for us to become bank robbers, embezzlers, quacks, or anything else of the sort. If, however, we regard money as the symbol of our own past efforts in a worthy cause, then it becomes an entirely different motivator of our action.

There is nothing wrong about working for money. There is nothing wrong in obtaining as much of it as possible, as long as we get it by honest means and remember that it is only an evidence of our own work. When our theory changes from this, no matter how successful we are in securing money, our reason for action is under suspicion.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. Describe a situation in which a person's motive for doing something affects your judgment of what he does. Daily papers, stories, or your own experiences can supply such an example.
2. Do you ever feel tempted toward impulsive action? What is your general tendency in a situation of this sort? Give examples of impulsive actions that were inefficient.
3. Under what circumstances do you think that we should not try to avoid conflicts? Under what circumstances should conflicts be avoided?
4. An English journalist recently satisfied himself about his wants by making a list of things that he did not want. Among the "fine" things that he did not want were these: a yacht—too many things to look after; a large country estate—too much danger of frogs in the cistern and visiting aunts; an expert chef—too much pale green sauce and not enough

sausage; or a title—too many people expecting favors and tips. Also, he did not want influenza, elastic-sided boots, spinach, tame mice, mumps, or police tags. In fact he wanted only sleep after he had finished his list. Examine some of the things that you seem to want and see if you really want them. Are the items in your list wants or desires or wishes? Why?

5. How can one determine whether a want or desire is good or not?

6. Can you think of any situations in which it would be a good thing to have one's course of action interfered with?

7. Do you believe that competition is valuable in industry? What is the relation of competition to the idea of interference discussed in this chapter?

8. Do you think that extreme radicals would remain as radical as they are if they examined carefully the reasons why it is sometimes necessary for a government to make rulings which are unpleasant to individuals? (This does not imply that all requirements of all governments are good.)

9. Do you think it is good policy for a person who has talent in some direction and hence finds his work in that line easier than the average individual does, to take advantage of that situation just to succeed?

10. What is your feeling about the importance of money as a life objective? Argue it out with some friend who has an opposing opinion.

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## CHAPTER VI

# How People Do Things

### 1. FIRST THINGS FIRST

EVER since the dawn of our lives, there has been the problem of doing first things first. Health and physical fitness are primary; food, clothing, comfortable surroundings, and physical recreations are first not only at the beginning of life but also as long as we live. Immediate discomfort is a prompter whenever there is a lack of any of these physical necessities. This much of our lives seems almost to be automatic until we find that certain persons, and perhaps ourselves, require many varieties of these necessities.

Early in our lives we found that mental health and fitness were also needed. As we are human beings, we must think, and the quality of our thinking depends on what we use when we think. Closely related to this, is the need for what may be called social health and fitness. In fact we seldom think of ourselves without including someone else. There are, then, these mental and social necessities.

Mental and social necessities include friends, institutions, and keys to present-day living. Friends are needed to stimulate us and draw us out of loneliness and emptiness. Institutions, such as families, schools, churches, and the law, are needed to protect us and help us to live together. Keys to present-day living, such as knowledge about sci-

ence and society and skill in art, play, and industry, are needed to enable us to help ourselves. Varieties of these mental and social necessities are as important as varieties of physical necessities.

First things first, as a motto for living, has different meanings for different persons and for the same person at different times. The physical needs of an infant are so impressive that its other needs are often overlooked. Even at that stage mental and social needs are great. By the time of adolescence physical needs may be so easily supplied that mental and social needs may be magnified too greatly. Actually all these needs continue throughout life; none of them can be neglected safely.

*The best early education that a person can get, both in and out of school, is that which makes him a competent judge of what need is first, and supplies him with the ability to fulfill that need.* This is the meaning of "first things first." To follow this motto, one must have a sound body, a sound mind, and a sound relation to society. To use these three kinds of equipment effectively, everyone must harness himself, create opportunities, and learn to work alone and with other people. These points are discussed in the next sections of this chapter.

## 2. HARNESSING OURSELVES

Why should we harness ourselves? Many people have not done so; can we not follow their example and let ourselves go unrestrained? One of the most famous men who failed to harness himself was Samson, whose story is told in the Bible. As a youth he was more promising than any man of his time. His physical prowess gave him power to conquer man or beast. His mental talent gave him power

to judge men and things. His social genius gave him every boon that he sought. But with all these gifts, Samson is known to us as both judge and fool. For his three powers, physical, mental, and social, were neither harnessed nor directed.

Large cities have certain streets in which such unharnessed men walk to and fro, some of them looking for work and others looking for an escape from work. About twenty years ago a man took his thirteen-year-old son to a Chicago street which is still a haunt of the ne'er-do-well. The boy had not visited the street before, and he looked with interest at the crowds of men. The father, who had already begun to worry about his son—as parents do—did the same. He remained almost silent and left the boy to his own observing and thinking. After spending some time on that street and in the ill-kept shops, father and son went quickly to a sumptuous hotel. After preparing for dinner, they entered the dining room, where they were seated among men and women of refinement and means.

The father noticed that the boy seemed to be drawing the desired lesson, and without saying more about the obvious contrast between the street scenes and the hotel, remarked, "Son, many of the people in this room had no better opportunities than some of the men whom you saw on the other side of the city. Where will you be when you are a man?"

Without a moment's hesitation the lad replied, "Father, I'll be in this hotel."

From that day, the boy began harnessing himself for the useful life that he is now leading. He is competent physically, mentally, and socially. Not every boy can have such an expensive lesson from such an able father, but every young person can make a choice between the slums and

usefulness. Even if plans go awry, the value of the choice, if acted upon, is clear.

One of the main points about harnessing ourselves is this: We must begin early. A good reason for beginning early is that life is short. Our childhood has already slipped away, and in a few years our adolescence will have passed. This thought would be dismal, however, only to a person who was failing physically, mentally, or socially. If we are taking care of the present, we can be fairly certain that the future will be satisfactory. We can make our lives long, or at least we can make our lives rich, if we learn day by day how to use them. Completeness of each day's living, rather than the total number of years spent in existence, can be our measure of life. An old Roman saying tells us briefly:

To a little add a little, to that little yet a little more;  
Shortly then you will discover that your heap will be a  
mighty store.

Our three thousand hours a year for play, three thousand more for work, and another three thousand for sleep give us time to add many a "little" to our physical, mental, and social stores. If these hours are well spent, they give us the best of human life as we go along.

In applying this Roman couplet, we must return to our principle of doing first things first. Before beginning to add a little to a little, we should select something that is suitable from every point of view for us to add—something that is worthy of as good human beings as we believe ourselves to be. In making this selection of what we should add, four points are necessary for us to consider: First, *we should overestimate rather than underestimate ourselves*. Second,

we cannot add a "mighty store" to ourselves in a single day, but instead *we must go step by step*, making sure that each step is right and that it is actually taken. Third, *we must finish what we start* unless our best reasoning tells us not to do so. If it was worth starting, it is probably worth finishing. Real obstacles are rare. This leads to the fourth point—*we must face facts squarely*.

Many obstacles—some of them within ourselves—can be avoided or passed over if a strong will is driving us. Of all the obstacles the worst and most common is self-deception, of which more will be said later. By this obstacle we deceive ourselves with such thoughts as these: "I shall do this better tomorrow"; "I ought to do something else today"; "I have already worked too hard or too long"; or "After all, this thing was not worth doing." Half the time, not one of these excuses is true. Another kind of obstacle within ourselves is the collection of false notions that almost everyone has. One of them is the notion that good luck will carry us to success. Another is that we can dodge or jump over a difficulty and still succeed—a notion that is a cousin to self-deceit, for it usually comes with the bad reason that "no one else will know." Actually everyone knows better than to be misled as much as many persons are, but it is often easier or more comfortable to be misled than to face facts squarely. We should cast out any tendency to deceive ourselves, as well as any to be deceived by others.

Harnessing ourselves includes also the directing of our physical, mental, and social resources. Such directing of resources is like the directing of an orchestra. The conductor begins by selecting music that is suitable and worthy of his orchestra. Next he proceeds step by step, finding



difficulties and overcoming them one by one. He requires each player to perform his part and also to play properly with all the other members of the orchestra.

In this way every person discovers how to direct his own instruments of living. This would be easy for us if we could follow the smooth road of our own momentary desires. But this path of least resistance too often leads to impassable walls or to a desert of nonaccomplishment. We must look far ahead and chart the route. Unlike the conductor of an orchestra who finds his course outlined on the pages of his music, the person who directs his own life must find his cues within himself and in his environment. As he finds his way, he can direct his mode of living to fit conditions. Instead of following what seems to be the easiest course, he finds better ways of harnessing himself and of using the resources which belong to everyone who takes the trouble to discover and use them.

A few rules for harnessing ourselves will summarize all these points. Get all the help that you can for following these rules, especially Numbers 1-5. The others are strictly for yourself.

1. Make a list of your personal resources.
2. Make a list of resources outside yourself.
3. Make a list of things that are worth doing.
4. Select something definite to do.
5. Make a definite plan and follow it until a better one is found.
6. Begin at once doing first things first.
7. Search everywhere for anything that can aid.
8. Make the best use of everything that can aid.
9. Proceed step by step, overcoming difficulties one by one.
10. Face facts squarely.

11. Follow the best course whether it is easy or not.
12. Finish what is started, unless the reasons for changing are better than those for going on.

### 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

As soon as a person has harnessed himself, he can either wait for an opportunity or make one. Many persons, perhaps most persons, wait. Such individuals are like vegetables—if good weather comes, all is well; otherwise they say that they never had an opportunity. This is one of the chief reasons why so few persons do anything that they expect to do. The good old saying, “Everything comes to him who waits,” does not apply here. Although it is often more comfortable to act like a vegetable and wait, it is always more sensible to act like an industrious human being and make opportunities.

(1) *Alertness and activity.* Alertness and activity aid in making opportunities. This is one reason that “nothing succeeds like success.” A person who succeeds in an enterprise is likely to become more alert and active. The opposite condition is found in a discouraged, unsuccessful person—he is usually inert and sluggish, as all of us are at times. But we have found that we can often change those times of downheartedness into times of success if we set ourselves in order and undertake something that we know we can do. The same is true of life in general—as a “bad” day can be turned into a “good” one by alertness and activity, so a profitless, negative life can be turned into a satisfying one. The career of Abraham Lincoln is an example of this.

One danger connected with alertness and activity is that they may lead only to change and not to progress.

Activity, by itself, may cause a person merely to shift from one thing to another so that nothing is well done. To avoid this rolling-stone condition, we need to remember the twelve rules for harnessing ourselves.

Sometimes almost any change is good, but the best change is the one which goes in the best direction. The best alertness and activity produce such a change. A person who is studying a foreign language is active, though he may be still searching his glossary for many words which he should have committed to memory much earlier. The longer such a plan is continued, the deeper the pupil is sunk in his own third-rate results. The best activity for him is of a different order: He should make a list of his troublesome words and learn them. Otherwise he must continue to dodge his difficulties instead of facing them. This happens also when a pupil gets unnecessary aid from someone else. Dodging difficulties in this way instead of facing them leads to further dodging. It requires activity, but it does not fit our rules, and good activity must fit all the rules. Otherwise activity reduces opportunities instead of making them. We must be alert and active in the right direction.

(2) *Being ready*. Readiness is another item to consider in making opportunities for ourselves. Occasionally in trying to make ourselves ready for every opportunity, we prepare for many things that may never happen. But there are two sides to this. We may spend time learning a skill that seems useless to everyone but ourselves—and possibly to ourselves, too. The same may be true of certain information which we acquire. We may work hard in obtaining such skill or information; and we may think that it will never be useful. And then comes a surprise. The surprise is an unexpected opportunity.

A good example of this is the case of a boy who lived in a Midwestern city. He was unsuccessful in all school-work, for none of his teachers "understood" him. His parents were very poor, ignorant, and disorderly. And so the boy did just as he pleased. As soon as warm days came in the spring, he went to the hills in the open country and watched for snakes, which he caught and carried to his home in the slums. He studied all these snakes—rattlers, adders, and other poisonous ones were his specialty. In the city library he found out all he could about such reptiles. This led him to study antidotes for snake poisons, and antidotes led him on to chemistry. Finally his teachers in the grades could do no more for him, and he was sent to the city high school. But he did not go. The truant officer found him in the public library and took him to the superintendent of schools. To the boy this was like going back to jail. The superintendent soon discovered the boy's real problems and interests. The boy knew so much about poisons and the chemistry of poisons that the superintendent promoted him from a failing eighth-grade rank to the eleventh-grade chemistry class. There this boy, who had always failed, led his class, and in the absence of the teacher, sometimes taught the class. That was a part of his surprise. Without knowing that he had done so, he had made himself ready for the work that he really wanted to do. The following autumn he was manager of the chemical exhibit at the county fair. Within a few months he was given another surprise when the superintendent again called for him and placed him as chemist in a small manufacturing plant. This boy's hobby had made him ready when his opportunity came; he had made his opportunity by preparing for the unexpected turn in his life.

Getting ready for an opportunity is not always pleasant. Another boy, Robert Louis Stevenson, was compelled year after year to study mathematics and engineering. He disliked all of this, for he wanted to write poems and stories. After many wearying years his father gave up and let the young man follow his own way. Then it was that he found use for some of his earlier studies, and if you have read *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped*, you have undoubtedly enjoyed his skillful application of his knowledge of surveying and engineering.

This notion of readiness has limitations. First, no one can be ready for everything. Whoever tries to do so ends as a jack-of-all-trades and a master of none. Thorough training in a few things is usually better than a smattering in many. Second, the value of readiness depends on the individual person and on the kind of thing which he has mastered. Possibly there are persons in the world who could make good use of anything by seeing in it certain values which others could not see. But since no one can be ready in all things, it is necessary to apply our twelve rules and select what seems to be the best thing for each of us to master.

One of the oddest excuses that unsuccessful people make is this: "I had an opportunity to do something but I missed it." If they had faced the facts squarely, they would have seen either that they did not actually have the opportunity or that they did not want an opportunity which might have compelled them to exert themselves. Others often adopt the superstition that opportunity knocks but once. Another superstition held by such persons is the belief that they are unlucky. Both superstitions may be comforting aids in self-deceit, but beyond that they have

no value. Opportunities knock more than once, and we can so plan our lives that either they will visit us many times or we can go to them.

With vegetables the case is different. If corn is nearly mature and warm sunshine comes, the corn will ripen. If frost comes instead of warm sunshine, the corn will never mature. The life of the corn is then forever doomed. If the corn were able to look back upon life, it might justly complain. Forces that were entirely beyond its control made life impossible.

With the farmer who planted the corn, other opportunities are still possible. He may have a supply of corn that will carry him through to another, more successful season or he may have other crops that he can exchange for corn. At any rate he may be able to plant his corn earlier the next year or he may plant a kind of corn that will mature before the time of killing frost. He may decide to raise other kinds of crops or he may move to a more favorable locality. There are so many ways in which the farmer can find further opportunities that no one can tell which he will follow. If all farmers were to adopt the two superstitions stated above, there would be but little corn. But farmers, unlike their grain, can devise new ways to make opportunity knock many times. Vegetables grow if opportunities come to them, but man can make opportunities for himself.

(3) *Ability to make an excellent choice.* Furthermore man often has a choice between a fair opportunity and an excellent one. This point can be illustrated also by the case of a farmer. In localities where the soil lacks certain chemicals, the farmer may have a fair crop of clover. He then has these two choices: He can harvest the clover and get a fairly good return for his labor, or he can plow his

meadow, turning the clover under the ground, and greatly improve his opportunity for getting better crops in the future—for the clover will enrich the soil. This case is like that of the boy who had a choice between two musical instruments. The harmonica was attractive and he knew that he could learn to play simple tunes on it in two weeks. The violin was also attractive but he knew that he could not learn to play anything well on it for many months. You may guess which he chose, why he chose it, and the quality of the opportunity offered by each instrument. The conclusion is that we can take an easy opportunity or reach for a better one. Sometimes it is wiser to take the easier opportunity, however: If the boy had had only ten hours to practice, he would have been foolish to have selected the violin.

In other cases the first opportunity is a short step that leads to a much longer one. If the short step is not taken first, the longer one can never be achieved. Lindbergh might have waited vainly all his life to fly across the Atlantic had he not taken shorter flights that prepared him for the longer one. This is an instance of getting ready for the great opportunity by making the most of smaller occasions. In still other cases a person may be unable to do all that he had hoped to do; for such an individual there are two familiar sayings: "Half a loaf is better than none," and "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

These cases in which the easy thing is the best thing lead to another important point: We must be critical of our opportunities by asking whether they fit our own rules for harnessing ourselves. A poor opportunity may be worse than none, while an excellent opportunity gets its high quality partly from its demands upon ourselves; *the best opportunity is the one which demands the most and the best from*

*ourselves*. In this sense opportunity leads to responsibility. We must remember also that if we select one opportunity we may be unable to take advantage of others. If, for example, we have 1400 hours to spend in four years of high school on one subject, we can do any of the following: study Latin for four years, read 28,000 pages at the rate of twenty pages an hour of the best literature now printed in the English language, take four years of science, or play games two hours on every day of school. In making such a choice, we need to reason better than most people have reasoned, because wisdom in this respect is at a higher premium than it was in the pioneer days of America. To find our place in the modern world, we must take advantage of the good opportunities that come and try to plan others which might never come without a plan. This is the way to make opportunities for ourselves.

#### 4. LONE WORKERS AND GROUP WORKERS

Owing to natural bent or to habit, certain persons prefer to work alone while others prefer to work in groups. Solitary idleness ranks higher with some children and adults than social comradeship. Some people are co-operative; others are not. Although much can be said for such personal preferences, the point for us is that certain kinds of profitable activity require people to work alone while others require them to work in groups. Effective doing is more important than personal choice. How people do things alone and in groups will be discussed in this section.

(1) *The problem of being alone*. We may ask what people do or can do when they are alone. One thing that any person can do alone is to be idle. What is called idleness



deserves attention, for much time is spent in what appears to be idleness. If idleness means sitting alone or with only a cat and a cup of tea, and gazing thoughtlessly into space, then such a condition will yield about the same result as sleep. Such a condition is difficult to achieve, however. People, when alone and apparently idle, are actually doing something.

At times people indulge in solitary idleness to escape from the world about themselves. Then it is that their thoughts wander freely and take them to the land of nowhere where dreams come true. Then they have a million dollars to spend, power to rise to dizzy heights and crush a mighty foe, or beauty which dazzles the eyes of ardent suitors. Instead of these rapturous thoughts, there may be brooding over defeats, with self-pity carrying the dreamer into a tragic grave. Such thoughts of glory or oblivion leave the world unmoved, and when the dreamer's thoughts return to reality, he finds his body where he left it and his situation the same as it always was. Like certain motion pictures these thoughts are "not recommended for children or adults." The reason for their being "not recommended" is that they seldom if ever do any good to the solitary dreamer. They are more significant and often more interesting when they are talked over with friends. Then they may become pleasant recreation, even if they have little value in themselves.

What has just been said of "idle thoughts" does not mean that people should or can think of great things all the time. Such a condition may be desired, but few individuals can reach so high a level. Most people, even the greatest, spend more time on trifling thoughts than they would like to admit. This condition seems to be a normal one, in which everyone spends a part of the three thou-

sand hours a year that he has for play. We cannot avoid thinking, and part of our thinking is likely to be recreation. The main point of this is that we should pull ourselves back from profitless fancy to profitable reality as often as our good plan of life requires us to. If we must dream, let us dream like artists!

Many things can be done best when we are alone. The reason is that no one can help us with certain matters. We can memorize best when we have no distractions. We can solve some of our problems best when we are alone. Some of us—but apparently not all of us—can be most original when alone. The rest of us, probably, do our best when we get ideas from other people and then organize them alone, or at least when we are certain that no one will interrupt us. The problem of being alone is a personal problem—some people work best, or think they work best, when alone; others need, or think they need, friends who will give helpful suggestions about what to do next in any problem. This is a practical rule: If you do not get good results when you work alone, try to work with someone who will stimulate you. But be sure that you do not let the other person do what you should do.

Woodrow Wilson is said to have been a "lone worker." What is meant by this is that he often sat alone at his typewriter and wrote out his thoughts. But Wilson did not actually work alone. No one actually works alone. What Wilson did was to weave together his own ideas with those which he had gathered from other people and then to state all of them in his own way. He was really a group worker, although he sat alone and typed what seemed to be his own thoughts.

The problem of being alone is one of the most difficult ones for every person. At times we may spend our lonely

hours dreaming of what we could do with a million dollars, but at other times we have the more important problem of deciding what we shall do with the resources that we have today, of "harnessing ourselves" and finding the best solutions for our difficulties. We must reserve a place for lonely idleness, if this is our best recreation, but we must reserve a place also for thinking. If we can think best alone, then we should be alone part of the time. The problem of solitude is one that cannot and will not be decided except by each person for himself; if the writers of this book were able to decide it for others, they would say: *Study your situations with all the help that you can get, and then decide for yourselves.* Although this may seem to be an indefinite answer, it is the only one that can be given. If you can study your situations best by yourself, do so. But remember that your solution will have to fit other people as well as yourself.

(2) *Some things can be done by group workers; some things cannot.* What can be done best alone and what can be done best in groups? This question depends for its answer both on the person and on the thing he wishes to do. As a **general rule** he should do things as nearly as possible in the way they need to be performed finally. If he wishes to play basketball well, some activities must be performed in groups, while other things may be done alone. Intercepting a pass in basketball is impossible without other players, but shooting goals can be practiced alone. If a person wishes to play well in an orchestra, he must study and practice with other players, as well as alone. To play any one of the instruments well enough for the enjoyment of either the player or a listener requires more practice time than the group of players can spend together. Besides, each player has special difficulties to overcome, and it would be a waste of time for the entire orchestra to be present while

he drilled on his particular shortcomings. But if he is to play well with the group, he must learn also to follow the conductor and fit his own playing into a complicated performance. In either case he should follow a rule given by the composer Schumann: "Always practice as you would if your master were listening."

Other activities present similar problems. Arithmetic and algebra can be learned in a general way in groups, but each pupil must practice alone to acquire speed and accuracy. Group discussions may lead to a good topic for an English composition, to a good outline for the theme, and even to the writing of the composition. But the pupils who make the best suggestions in such discussions are those who also do much reading and writing alone. As with the orchestra *ordinary skill can be developed by group work, but superior skill requires individual practice*. In the social studies judgments may be formed while books are being read alone, but the judgments are often improved when each person compares his views with those of others. Group work is needed in social studies especially, because no one can be sure that his views are valid until after he has tested them among other persons. Social judgments are good only when they affect society in desirable ways.

Another value of working in groups can be found in most school subjects. This is the social stimulation which comes from the presence of other active persons. Part of this stimulation is due to competition, and part to the encouragement which seems to come from merely seeing comrades at work. Other people set the standards for how fast we must type, how clearly we must think, and how well we must draw or paint. The group, then, helps to fix the pace, and its criticisms make us more critical of our own thoughts and productions.

(3) *Leadership depends on co-operation.* People who become leaders learn to work with others. They balance their own desires and plans with those of other people. If a leader has a problem to solve, he seeks counsel from his followers. He may suggest ways to solve the problem, but he will try to get suggestions also from other members of his group. If he and his group find points upon which they agree, these points lead to further steps in solving the problem.

Often the leader tries to solve the problem before he meets the group. He may have a plan that he wishes the group to adopt; he may attempt to have the group follow steps that are already a part of his own plan. In doing so he again tries to get the suggestions of his followers. If suggestions he desires come from a member of his group, the leader commends the person who has made them. As the problem solving progresses, different members of the group make still more suggestions, all of which the leader credits to those who make them. If, on the contrary, he should try to have his own ready-made plan accepted, other members of the group would probably reject it and eject him as a dictator. The skillful leader so directs others that *they* develop a group plan. Such a plan is accepted willingly by all members of the group, because it is their own. The person who is unskillful as a leader may have a better plan than the leader, but he lacks the social insight needed for the adoption of his idea. In brief, the effective leader understands not only plans, but people.

The importance of committee work and other forms of co-operation justifies further discussion of leadership. Let us examine, then, some of the other ways in which a leader may proceed. If he has foresight he often begins his plans long before they are presented; he may do this

by talking with other persons who are likely to offer good suggestions. Later, after a plan is well blocked out, he may present a part of it to certain able members of his group. If he gains their support he will have little further difficulty when he meets the group as a whole, for these able members will seem to be the ones who are presenting the suggestions, and they will be strong enough to carry the plan through with only slight changes.

Although group leadership is seldom as simple as this description may sound, the points just stated comprise five essentials of leadership: First, *study the group problem alone and with others*; second, *gain the support, if possible, of able members of the group*; third, *give credit generously to those members who aid by their suggestions*; fourth, *be willing to accept changes if they are likely to aid in the solution of the problem*; and fifth, *remember that the important thing is not the personal feeling or honor of the leader but the problem itself*. You can readily see that these points show why the greatest leaders are sometimes unwilling to be chairmen of their committees: They can press the group harder toward a solution if someone else seems to be the leader.

By observing closely the activities of the leader, we can see also that he sometimes seems to do the opposite of what he really means to do. He may oppose the thing he wants; he may get his best help outside his circle of close friends; and he may seem quite disinterested in the outcome of a discussion. But he knows that he cannot develop a plan by himself or carry it out alone. *A successful leader's purpose is to advance a cause and not merely to advance himself*. Therefore he gives credit to whoever desires credit, and only indirectly gains distinction. To do this he must have learned that *a good leader is a good follower*.

## 5. HOW PEOPLE USE INVENTIONS AND DISCOVERIES

The first people had only a short range of vision, a short range of hearing, short arms, and little strength; they had no mechanical slaves and no knowledge of vitamins. Today, however, inventions and discoveries have increased our capacities to an extent that would seem miraculous to a primitive cave man. Discoveries of the uses of glass, for example, have taught modern man many lessons. He has learned how to have normal vision if his eyes are poor and how, by using powerful lenses, to see into the vast spaces of the universe. Telephone, telegraph, and radio have extended his range of hearing; tools have lengthened his arms and given him strength of which primitive man did not dream; and machines have become his slaves. While all these increases in man's powers have been made, still other discoveries have freed him from many fears and from most forms of pestilence which plagued the human race until recent days.

Inventions and discoveries have thus increased the power of man. Through the use of tools his hands have become more versatile, his physical powers have been multiplied far beyond those of an animal, and nearly all his bodily powers and senses have been extended. It will soon be a commonplace, for example, to talk from localities as far distant from each other as New York is from Little America in Antarctica.

(1) *Mastery or slavery.* With all these contrivances at his command man now needs to make an important choice. He must choose between slavery to his own inventions and discoveries, and skillful mastery of these new forms of control. Many critics of modern life fear that machines will

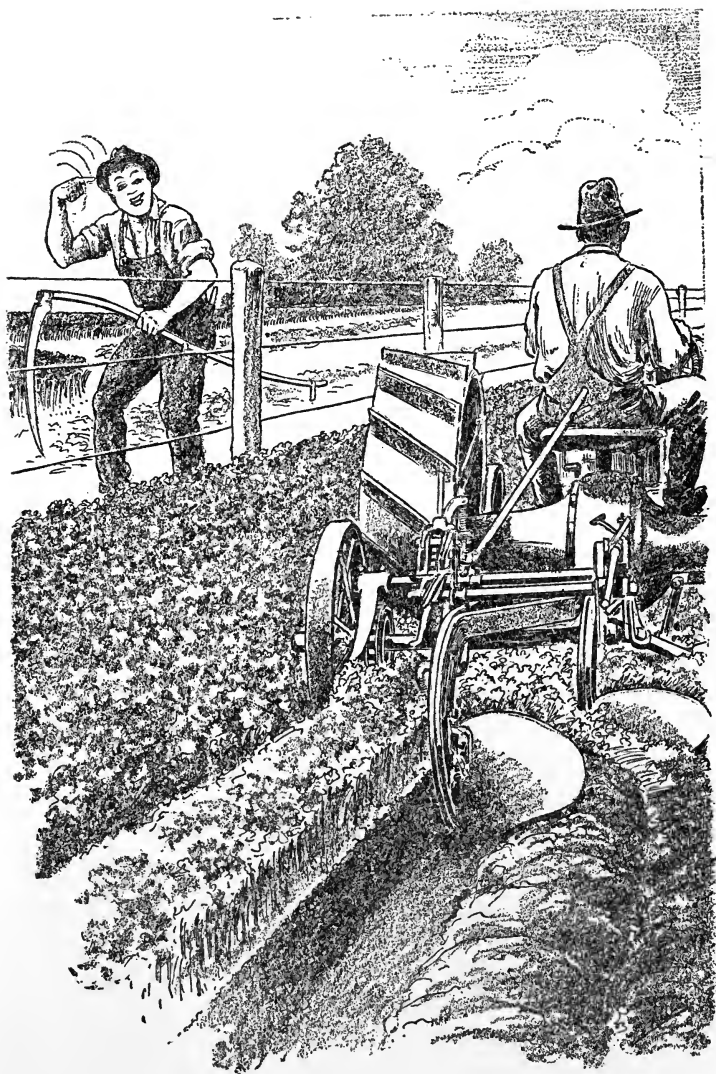
enslave man. The Victorian author Samuel Butler wrote a book called *Erewhon*—"nowhere." The inhabitants of Erewhon had passed through the machine age. They had invented machines which, they later discovered, were making slaves of men. Consequently they had passed laws making it a crime for a person to own or use any kind of machine. When the hero of the story arrived in the land of Erewhon, he carried a watch. This was a crime in that land. As soon as his crime was discovered, he was sentenced to prison and his watch was confiscated, carried across the hills, and thrown on the scrap heap along with other machines.

Other critics have tried to show us how we can live more freely and become better masters of life by means of machines. One of these, a Chinese scholar, has remarked that when he was traveling across Asia, he required the services of one man to pull him in a rickshaw. After he left China and traveled in a country that made greater use of machines, he found that a very few men, together with machines, could draw a large group of passengers. It occurred to this Chinese scholar that engineering work had a better influence upon a laborer than pulling a rude Chinese vehicle. Another critic, Tolstoy, told his people many years ago that the great trouble with their country (Russia) was that it was still in the handwork stage, while other countries had freed men from much of the most dismal and routine handwork by the invention of machines.

Anyone can readily see that a machine can be used either for the benefit of man or for his degradation. The same is true of discoveries. One of the pressing problems of our times is that of learning to use these new resources wisely.

(2) *Environmental changes through invention and discovery.* In





THE OLD AND THE NEW

a previous chapter the environment of human beings was discussed. We may now consider the changes of environment which are produced by inventions and discoveries. Among these changes is the decreased size of the world. For in a sense, the world has grown smaller and more intelligible through our inventions. A journey from Washington to Baltimore is not difficult or tedious now. A journey from New York to San Francisco need not be made now in a clumsy sailing craft; it can, instead, be made in less than one day by airplane. Man has even changed the earth's surface by means of invention. In Seattle, for example, thousands of tons of earth were moved into Puget Sound to make a useless, hilly area available for modern life.

Man has found energy in the form of coal and oil, and by means of the resources in the earth's crust he has been able to invent machines that are revolutionizing human life. Waterfalls have been harnessed to produce electricity. Slowly moving rivers have been dammed to produce powerful artificial waterfalls. We have gone so far in these directions that modern man may be said to think in terms of inventions and discoveries.

In addition to changes of these sorts we have discovered natural laws which, when practiced, change our environment in other ways. The relation between bacteria and disease, the principles of mixing colors in art work, and the relation between soil and crop production are examples of such discoveries.

Machines can now give to all what was once available to only a few. In many parts of our country, electric lighting is now cheaper than kerosene lighting was in the days of our grandparents. Clothing, cars, radios, and many other machines or products of machines have become so

cheap and common that articles which were once regarded as unattainable or as luxuries are now regarded as necessities by everyone.

(3) *Self-expression through machines.* Instead of crippling mankind, machines aid in self-expression. The typewriter, for example, enables us to record thoughts more legibly, rapidly, and accurately than was possible before this machine was invented. To see the advantages of the piano over the crude musical instruments of the past, we have only to compare the richness of expression which can be achieved by the use of this modern instrument with the feeble tones of its ancestors. The motion picture, although so very familiar to high school pupils of today, was unknown until recent years. It gives us the ability to attain a new motility in art. Instead of portraying objects in a fixed position, the motion picture shows them passing from place to place over a period of time. Time itself is thus portrayed by the motion-picture machine. To this, the sound picture adds human voices and music.

What use do we make of our increased power? Machines have affected the quantity of life. We may well ask whether or not they have improved the quality of life. Are we freer because we have machines? If so, what are we doing with our increased freedom? These are social questions for the young generation to consider and answer.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. Outline tomorrow's activities for yourself according to the motto *First things first*. Include at least ten items. Try seriously to follow your program tomorrow.

2. Are you equipped to carry on your program? If not, try to equip yourself. For your private use, you may need a list

of items that must be attended to today to make you fit for tomorrow. Apply the "rules for harnessing ourselves" to yourself.

3. Make a list of Samson's qualities and show wherein his failure was due to his own neglect to harness himself (see the *Book of Judges*, XIV-XVI).

4. What obstacles, in the form of self-deception, have you observed in yourself or others? What remedies can you propose for this mental rubbish?

5. Debate: Opportunity knocks more than once. What is your conclusion? If you decide that opportunity comes many times, would a person be safe in letting many opportunities pass?

6. What are the advantages and the disadvantages in (a) working alone and (b) working in groups?

7. Give an example of how a person may race with himself to break his own earlier record.

8. Select any group leader whom you know and analyze his success in terms of the five essentials of leadership in this chapter. Add any other essentials that you discover.

9. How do you account for the strange laws of Erewhon? Do you agree with the Chinese scholar? Defend your answer.

10. How do the rules for harnessing ourselves apply to the questions in the last paragraph of this chapter?

### *Further Reading*

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## CHAPTER VII

### Capitalizing Our Differences

CAN you imagine two persons exactly alike? How would they feel toward each other if they met? Would they melt into one person, or would they start a battle? No one knows, for two identical persons have never lived. We are different from our closest friends. Some of us can do some things and some of us others. If all of us desired deeply to be G-men, what a world of detectives we should have! Or if all of us could sing, who would listen? Still worse, if all of us wished only to listen, who would sing?

Fortunately for ourselves as well as for others, people are unlike and wish to be unlike. The real question, then, is this: Can we maintain our individualities and can we live successfully if we are different from everyone else? The answer is *Yes*. This chapter shows how we can be our different selves and still be useful and satisfactory to society and to ourselves—that is, how we can capitalize or make the best of ourselves.

#### I. WHY THERE ARE DIFFERENCES AMONG PEOPLE

There are two principal causes of differences among human beings. First, no two human beings have exactly the same structure. One may be taller or stronger than the other, he may be heavier or more agile, or he may have more responsive protoplasm. Second, the environments

of no two individuals are exactly the same. Even with members of the same household, each is treated somewhat differently from the other. The nearest approach to similar structure and environment is the case of "identical" twins, but these are so rare that the general statements hold.

Members of society, looking at individuals and races, find many differences. They find, for example, that some persons are excellent athletes, and they reward them accordingly. They find that others are unusually competent in dealing with people, and they give them some kind of political reward. While society now and then makes correct judgments of this kind, it sometimes makes disastrously incorrect ones. The reason for this is that society is often misled by appearances, by the "show" that people put on, instead of judging them by their true worth.

Judgments based on appearance alone should be made cautiously. We should distinguish between differences that may be called natural and those that have been acquired. Wrong judgments are most unfortunate when they are applied to large groups of people or to members of certain races. Everyone recognizes that the peoples of various countries live differently, according to the customs of their localities, but it is not so well recognized that the differences among these peoples may be due to geographic and social variations in the countries themselves rather than to inborn variations among the individuals.

There are many possibilities for differences at birth. One may, for example, be born of tall parents or of short ones. Such variations in parentage frequently are reflected in the varied heights of the children. Moreover one's ancestors may be either healthy and strong or unhealthy and weak. Children of these two kinds of parents are likely to have bodies which are accordingly either strong or

weak. Differences in physique may lead to differences in disposition, so that the unhealthy, weak child has to guard constantly against a feeling of inferiority, if, indeed, he is not actually handicapped by his physical weakness. He may overcome his physical weakness, however, and develop a stronger and more dependable disposition than the healthy child does. This possibility is based, of course, upon the assumption that individuals can decide upon and arrive at their own destinies; that is, that they can harness themselves and succeed.

The chances of differences due to environment are numerous also. A child may live in a locality in which all the inhabitants are sturdy farmers. In such an environment this child is certain to be given a number of tasks that will tend to make him a sturdy individual. Another child may live in an environment where the chief concern of his elders is social climbing. While such environment may produce a kind of sturdiness, it is unlikely to develop the homely virtues found in the rural locality. These environmental differences and others that have been described in an earlier chapter, are concerned with ideas and attitudes rather than with inherited physical qualities.

If an all-seeing eye were to look upon human beings, which would be more impressive—differences or similarities? Probably this all-seeing eye would be impressed more by similarities than by differences. All human beings have common characteristics, such as the ability to walk erect, to speak, and to use various devices that they have invented. Again, they have similar contours, their variations in size being minor as compared with the major similarities in shape. This chapter will continue to emphasize differences, but the reader should remember that similarities exist and that they may outweigh the differences.



The reason for the emphasis here upon differences is that society is complex and requires each person to adjust his unique organism to whatever position he occupies or expects to occupy in society.

## 2. DIFFERENCES AMONG INDIVIDUALS

Although a human being is usually said to have a mind and body, we have never seen the mind without the body or the body without the mind. If either were absent, the remainder would not be a human being. Still we speak of the body as if it were an object by itself. We can see it and observe its motions. Furthermore we speak of the mind as if it were somewhere inside the body, though we cannot see it. We can see only what we call the effects of the mind, as shown by bodily actions, including speech and attitudes. Both the body and the mind are affected constantly by environment. We can save ourselves much confusion if we always remember that *when we speak of the body or any of its parts we are talking about only a part of the complex mixture of body, mind, and our environment*. This point is essential for the understanding of the present chapter.

In the discussion of the physical basis of life and living in Chapter III, some of the differences in the structure of human beings were mentioned. Variations in size are so pronounced even among members of the same family that certain duties and activities which are assigned to some members could not be performed by others.

Size is not the only consideration in many physical activities. An individual may be powerful, but too sluggish to perform certain actions. Another individual may be undersized, but with unusual physical control, he may perform duties that would be impossible for many larger

persons. Instances of these differences can be found among athletes.

Closely related to athletic ability is the capacity to make the finer bodily co-ordinations required by many occupations or by such activities as public speaking. As is well known, some individuals are able to adjust their fingers to the intricate demands of the violin, while others can produce accurate movements only in connection with skills that require less delicate co-ordinations. Physical control, in which steadiness, dexterity, and endurance are required, is so important in many occupations that a knowledge of one's control may influence one's choice of a vocation. If a person lacks steadiness in the control of his hands, he could hardly expect to succeed as a surgeon, although he might succeed in many other occupations. Surgery would likewise require dexterity and endurance. These traits would be demanded also of an artist. One person, therefore, may possess sufficient dexterity and steadiness to become an artist, while another person with equally strong artistic interests can become only a patron of art.

People differ also in stamina. In nearly every locality a few pupils work many hours each week in addition to performing their school tasks. Some of these pupils will continue to do the work of one and a half or two persons for the remainder of their lives. Other pupils, either through disposition or physical weakness, shield themselves from such a rigorous life. Of those persons who are somewhat unfit, some are able, by careful planning of their activities, to accomplish much more than is usually accomplished by those who have more robust physiques.

Another set of structural differences is found in the sense organs. Certain pupils are equipped with highly sensitive

or "irritable" sense organs, while those of others are dull, sometimes from a physical defect. When the deficient organ happens to be that of either vision or hearing, the differences in learning capacity are costly unless a correction is made. Many pupils have been judged somewhat below normal in general mentality, although their real difficulty has been with either seeing or hearing. Theodore Roosevelt, whose defect was described earlier, is a good example of this.

In addition to the foregoing differences, there are those that exist between members of opposite sexes. The structural differences are obvious to anyone who has seen both boys and girls in certain games, such as baseball. Other structural differences are seen in rate of growth and in stature at maturity. Sex differences enable many members of one sex to perform duties which could not be performed so readily by many members of the other sex. How many of the activities now performed by men could be performed by women, we shall have no means of knowing, except as women become engaged in more and more occupations. It is probable that society is responsible to a greater extent than bodily differences for the division of labor between the two sexes. Evidence for this statement can be found by considering the pursuits of women in various parts of the world, many of which are believed in America to be too rugged for the gentler sex.

Still other differences, which for some individuals are essential, exist in complexion and comeliness. The list of traits that affect our judgments of other persons can be extended by any close observer of human beings. These minor differences probably have in themselves little to do with an individual's disposition or general ability. They have so much to do, however, with human relationships,

that in many cases they probably decide whether or not a person will have a feeling of inferiority or of confidence. What each person is or can become depends on all these conditions, in addition to many which are usually classified as mental. They will be further discussed in the following sections.

### 3. DIFFERENCES AMONG RACES

In a country like America we must study differences among races. We must decide whether or not we shall try to continue early national attitudes toward races or to change to an attitude of greater tolerance. In America we have all races, Indian, Caucasian, Mongolian, Negro, and brown—people from every country. America is often referred to as a melting pot. It is a melting pot in many respects. These races have become mixed, so that many citizens are descendants of two or more races, according largely to the locality in which their ancestors happened to live.

The melting-pot conditions that we see in general life activities are possibly even more significant than the mixing through intermarriage. In schools we sometimes find as many as twenty-five different countries represented in a single classroom of thirty-five pupils. This was true in Gary, Indiana, some years ago. Our college football teams provide another example. Anyone who is familiar with the names of players recognizes that some of their ancestors must have come from both central and western Europe, while the color of other players indicates that their origins are African. But anyone who attempted to classify college students on the basis of names only would be misled. In one of our own classes recently, for example,

there was a blond German with a Chinese name and a brown Hawaiian with a German name. Such conditions are so common that we frequently overlook them.

Can you tell the differences among races by their appearance, work, play, manner, or dress? Let us consider the common characteristics of human beings of different races and countries. In size all the members of one race may be thought to differ from members of another race. The Chinese are usually much shorter than the Scandinavians. There are Chinese, however, who are six feet tall, and who, by their stature, could not be distinguished from Europeans. For the most part, however, Mongolians are shorter than Caucasians. In color Germans have frequently been referred to as blond, although most Americans are acquainted with Germans who are very dark. Negroes are ordinarily very dark, but a number of our Negroid citizens are lighter than many Russians, Germans, or southern Europeans. In regard to agility every race and nationality has members who are clumsy and others who are skillful.

In science and invention the Caucasian race has made the greatest strides. How much of this success has been due to environmental advantages in the countries populated by Caucasians, cannot be determined now. Caucasians have had better opportunities than members of other races. Until the "less scientific" races have the kinds of opportunities now provided in Europe and America, we cannot judge them accurately. Many Mongolian students in America and Europe have distinguished themselves in scientific research, such as bacteriology, physics, chemistry, and so on.

In industry certain races have been called imitators while others have been called original workers. Often the

Japanese are classed as imitators nowadays, because of their rapid adoption of Western civilization. Their resourcefulness has been indicated recently by their remarkable ability to adapt themselves and their country to the industrial demands of modern life. These demands have led them to make marked improvements in machinery and industrial management. In the textile industry, for example, Japan is now a rival of the foremost textile country of the world—England. Within a few years she has changed from a country which produced a small amount of textiles to a country which produces more than England does. This development has been due in part to the adaptability of the Japanese, but also in part to their own inventions. They have invented a loom which has increased production many times beyond that of English looms. Instead of imitating, Japan is in this respect leading England, and the latter has tried to obtain rights to manufacture and use this loom.

Distinctive art has been produced by members of nearly all races. While there are national and racial differences in music, it appears that members of any race can develop music of any kind that has been produced by any other nation. Polish and Russian composers have composed excellent Spanish music, French musicians have composed music which follows Chinese patterns, while the American composer MacDowell insisted that his compositions were German rather than American. In literature we can find fine fiction, essays, or poetry produced by members of all races—Persian, Chinese, American Indian, French, German, Russian, English, and Hawaiian.

Of other contributions, every nation makes its offering. In religion more persons have been affected, perhaps, by various Hindu faiths than by Christianity. Although a

comparison of the quality of various faiths may result unfavorably for certain races, there are close similarities among many of the fundamental beliefs, particularly those that affect moral conduct. In schoolwork honor societies draw their members from all races. In play the different races vary according to the customs of the countries. In manners Western people differ so widely from Orientals that certain misunderstandings frequently arise. Most Americans will concede, however, that the Chinese set an example in politeness that would be difficult, though possibly desirable, for most of us to follow. If, then, we were to attempt to classify a German, an American, or a Chinese in any of these matters, we should have great difficulty.

All great peoples have copied, adapted, and improved upon the work of others. Consequently there is an overlapping of the qualities of success in different racial groups. The best individuals of each race in America excel in all significant respects the average members of all the other races; the most intelligent of the Negroes are brighter than the average white man, and so on. Every racial or national group that has as many as one million people runs the entire course from deceit to honesty, from ignorance to scholarship, from idiocy to genius, from waste to thrift, from boorishness to social grace. What may be done by the different races of America cannot as yet be told. It can be discovered only when school and society give special encouragement to members of certain of our neglected races which have not had fair opportunities in our country. The school cannot, however, provide equal opportunities for everyone until members of certain races are no longer barred by prejudice from engaging successfully in vocational activities. As everyone knows, vocational opportunities are now restricted to certain racial groups.

When an adult immigrant arrives in America, he often tries to continue the work he did in his mother country. Moreover he brings with him his national customs, attitudes, and forms of training. A Hollander is likely to become a nurseryman, a German artisan may produce fine cabinetwork, a Dane is likely to become a dairyman, Japanese immigrants frequently turn to gardening, and Negroes have undertaken successfully all kinds of labor.

But not all adults follow the occupation of their mother countries, and besides, many of our immigrants come from countries where a variety of work is found. The kind of work finally selected by an immigrant or by an immigrant group often depends on the occupation of immigrants who have come earlier to the same locality. In China, for example, not all the inhabitants are laundrymen, but when Chinese come to America many of them establish laundries. If a Dane migrates to Wisconsin he is likely to become a dairyman, but if he goes to Chicago he is likely to engage in any one of the varied occupations for which he finds himself fitted. As mentioned above, the opportunities for different peoples vary in America. All occupations, for example, are open to immigrants from Ireland. The Irish are welcomed here as poets, policemen, or politicians. But this is not true for all racial and national groups. Final choice depends, then, on occupations in the mother country, opportunities here, friends, financial resources, and personal and social ability. We may add that if a member of a less welcome group becomes distinguished here, he is likely to be superior personally to an equally successful member of a group that is welcome. If you study our immigration laws, you will see which races are legally most unwelcome.

Five hundred years ago America had no place in what



was called civilization. Now America is a great nation. What has made the difference? Plainly immigrants from foreign countries have been the makers of our nation.

Who were these immigrants and what were their contributions? A good answer to this question has not been written, but Louis Adamic has proposed that you answer it yourself.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Adamic urges that you organize XYZ clubs to find out what your own race or immigrant group has contributed or is contributing to America. Since he knows the Yugoslavic group, he tells us of its contributions and gives thereby a few suggestions for the work of the club. From the records, he finds his people in America from 1492 to the present—sailing with Columbus, pioneering in California, inventing with Edison, and shaping our educational program.

As soon as your own XYZ club begins to investigate, you may find, of course, that certain members of your race have contributed much without coming to America, while others came here and worked. If your ancestors were French, for example, you will find at once that Frenchmen living in Europe contributed ideas important in the formation of our Constitution. You will discover that your cousins in France today influence the clothing that we wear, the books that we read, and the music that we hear. As far as French immigrants in this country are concerned, you will find that your nation has contributed distinguished gifts from the days of the Huguenots to present-day Hollywood.

Whatever your race, you will find that it, like all other races, has been affected by what America has offered. You will find that at times your people have been helped and at other times hindered, by either our national re-

<sup>1</sup> *Harper's Magazine*, November, 1934.

sources or by our citizens or by both. Coal is one of our resources that has helped or hindered many people, partly by its existence here and partly by the ways in which it has been mined and marketed. By their attitudes and their treatment of immigrants, old residents of this country have often interfered with the welfare of our newcomers. Such a condition has extended to national groups like the Germans, who suffered persecution in the United States during the World War, although they have been favored at other times. While many of the causes of the different kinds of treatment of various national groups are due to national or racial differences, yet we cannot excuse any longer the injuries that arise chiefly from prejudices of the past.

Your club may teach either humility or pride to its members. It should teach both. It should help to cultivate in America the tolerance on which her welfare depends. For America's greatness is due to her people, and her people's strength has been due in a large part to the differences that enable them to supplement one another in personal and national activities. Let the useful differences remain and let us turn them in fruitful directions. If, after your club has worked for a year, any member thinks that his own race is and always has been superior to all other races, we suggest that you raise a travel fund and send him on an extended trip to foreign countries.

#### 4. WHAT TO DO ABOUT OUR DIFFERENCES

Differences among people will exist forever. Therefore we must accept them and find out how to use them effectively. This means that in addition to harnessing ourselves as individuals, we must harness ourselves as group workers

on a national scale. The reason for this is easy to see: Our American people are or should be united for many common purposes.

Fortune has favored us with great differences among our people. These differences, whether individual or racial, can add to the richness of our life by giving color and variety to it. Instead of trying to mold everyone after the same pattern, we should encourage in others and cultivate in ourselves the differences that stimulate desirable development. To carry on the program of solving local and national problems and of developing our material and intellectual resources, we have people from every race and country—we have all nations within our own. Americanization means the preservation of good qualities and the use of these qualities for personal and social good.

There are three things which everyone should attempt to do in regard to the differences among people. First, *make the best of them*—find out what you can do rather than what you cannot do, remembering that the first step in improving other people is the improvement of yourself. Second, *study and use the contributions and abilities of others*—every contribution is good, regardless of who makes it. Third, *accept your share of social responsibility* for the general pursuit of local and national welfare. A country is said to be the common possession of a people, but America belongs only to citizens who work in her behalf.

## 5. CAPITALIZING THROUGH GUIDANCE

One definite way in which you can capitalize your differences is in the choice of a vocation. Making one's way in the world, if one is fortunate enough to be forced to do so, presents the individual with a distinct challenge. Meeting

this challenge successfully by a wise vocational choice will be a source of deep and lasting satisfaction to him. But this choice cannot be made at random. It must be the result of careful thought and planning.

Consider this startling fact: Some authorities estimate that only five per cent of all boys and girls finally find themselves in the occupation for which they started to prepare or in which they originally thought they would like to work. This estimate, even though it may be too low, illustrates the enormous change that takes place both in the individual's vocational interest and in the occupational demand. Undoubtedly the waste in the preparation of those who train for one trade or occupation and finally go into another is enormous. Will you avoid this waste?

Before we consider the specific guides that will aid you in selecting your vocation, two important general considerations must be mentioned. First, *effective social adjustment and a well-balanced liberal education are assets in any vocation*. If you doubt this, ask an outstanding businessman in your community. He will tell you that too many applicants for positions have only a smattering of technical knowledge (some of which passed out of date during the very time it was acquired), and lack personality, poise, ability to meet people, and other traits necessary in every trade and occupation. The same leaders of industry often urge such applicants to expand their general education and develop a more socialized and better balanced personality. Second, *an attractive personality, good mental health, and ability to deal with people have increasing importance as qualifications for obtaining a position*. In skilled trades as well as in professions, this statement holds. Of course, it is understood, we want the specialized technician to be accurate at his job, as well.

As living standards rise, social differences among individuals disappear. The workingman owns a car, attends symphony concerts, goes to lectures, and engages in other activities that the Old World aristocracy once regarded as their peculiar privileges. This being the case, everyone, unless he is to lag sadly behind modern democratic culture, needs a broad, social training. Modern universities recognize this; technical schools which formerly allowed freshmen to rush immediately into a long series of technical courses, today require a year or two of the most general kind of liberal training. Why? Because the acid test of the industrial world has demonstrated the practical value of social abilities.

Sometimes it may be necessary for financial reasons to hasten into specialized training. If you are among those who are taking a trade course such as beautician work, automobile repairing, or so on, in a trade or polytechnic school, do not forget that you, too, if you are finally to capitalize fully your own differences and possibilities, must attend to the two points that we have just mentioned. Early specialization, combined with a neglect of general social training, is more likely than ever before to shorten the distance that a person can go in any vocation.

Next let us consider specific items that must be borne in mind in the selection of a vocation. Let us say at the outset that it is practically impossible to state at just what age you should make this choice. It should be made when you think rather definitely, and on the basis of something besides a childish whim, that you would like to prepare for a certain kind of work. Here are five factors for you to consider then.

(1) *Interest.* Unless you are lazy indeed, there is some profession or occupation in which you can become genu-

inely interested. By interest we do not mean only the desire for the money which you will receive for your efforts. We mean interest in the work itself. Investigations have shown time and again that true interest in work is one of the guaranties of success. Naturally we expect to receive compensation for what we do, but at times an interest simply in money blinds us to other equally important considerations. Hesitate a long time before entering a vocation in which you find no deep interest, even though it seems to offer you a high financial reward.

(2) *Ability*. Interest might incline a person toward a kind of work for which his ability is only average or even inferior. The hazard in this situation is obvious. Fortunately, however, interest and ability often go together. Work for which people have ability is likely to become interesting, and interest is likely to lead to effective performance. But beyond certain limits, interest will not compensate for lack of sheer physical endowment. No one whose maximum weight is less than one hundred and fifty pounds should be seriously interested in becoming a heavyweight boxing champion.

A few decades ago we had to guess at ability. Recently, however, enormous progress has been made in testing it accurately. There are, for example, aptitude tests which measure your chance of succeeding in a given vocation. If you are curious about your own ability, ask your teacher to give you a test for the vocation in which you are interested. Though we do not have such tests for every occupation, the likelihood is that one can be found, and if so, that it will help you in self-analysis.

(3) *Occupational survey*. It may happen that you are interested in a certain trade, occupation, or profession, and

have the ability to do well in it, but that the future demand for such work may be slight. Naturally anyone would hesitate to choose this vocation under such circumstances. Therefore a survey should be made to determine what occupations have a "future." In addition, trips should be taken to industrial plants in your vicinity in order for you to acquaint yourself with their possibilities. Those in charge will usually show you every courtesy; they are just as interested in getting capable people to work for them as you are in securing a position. What are the future industrial developments? What industries seem to be on the downgrade, to be demanding fewer and fewer people as time goes on? These and similar questions are important in making a vocational choice.

(4) *Characteristics of the vocation.* In making a comparison between your own qualifications and the characteristics that seem to be required in the work in which you are interested, you can receive valuable help from those who are already familiar with the vocation. If you are fortunate enough to be acquainted with someone who knows both you and the vocation you are doubly blessed. Do not neglect this possibility of aid.

(5) *Vocational preparation.* Many vocations require definite preparation. The schools or institutions offering such training are usually able and willing to give excellent counsel about their specialties to anyone who asks for it. Sometimes the counsel is discouraging, but you should remember that it is better to avoid a vocation for which you seem to have no definite personal qualifications than to fail later in it. If the counsel is favorable, you can undertake the training safely and with a justifiable hope of success. Since you are, moreover, different from every-

one, you should find a vocation in which your particular equipment will be a help instead of a hindrance to your success.

We have mentioned large numbers of people who never enter the vocation for which they have spent time and money in preparation. Their later choice of a vocation is often better than their first choice. Therefore the individual's task is to note at all stages of his development whether that development is what might normally be expected. For example in the course of his studies, a young man who was so greatly interested in engineering that he was willing to train for that already crowded profession, became fascinated by air conditioning. He then chose this new field of engineering and changed the direction of his training. Today he is a leading authority on air conditioning. This man's training for one vocation led him to another in which he succeeded. He capitalized his interest and ability by his survey of occupations, his study of his personal qualifications, and by excellent vocational preparation.

One final suggestion about vocational preparation is this: Be willing to change the direction of your preparation if a still better vocational choice can be made. The possibilities of your individual equipment and the happiness to be gained by success in life are too great to be foregone in an ill-chosen vocation.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. How do you reconcile the evidence of differences among people with the statement that "all men are equal"?
2. Lombroso, an Italian scholar, said that famous men are seldom tall. Find out, if you can, the heights of ten famous



men or women and draw your own conclusion about Lombroso's statement.

3. Why is it impossible for any two persons to be exactly alike?

4. Defend the statement that similarities among people outweigh differences. What is the value of a knowledge of individual differences in personal and social adjustment?

5. Make as complete a list as you can of the differences between yourself and one of your friends (the discussion in this chapter will suggest types of differences that may be included). Do the same for your race and another race.

6. What advantages have you and your friend, and your race and the race with which you compared your own, as a consequence of the differences?

7. How many nationalities are represented in your class?

8. What evidence is there for the statement that the ablest members of every nation or race are abler than the average member of any race?

9. Give examples to show that America and at least one other great nation have "copied, adapted, and improved upon the work of others." (Ancient history can be used here.)

10. To what extent do the recent immigrants whom you know follow pursuits that are especially fostered in their native countries? In what ways do they or could they enrich American life?

11. A world traveler recently gave the following impressions of the chief national traits:

Americans—most progressive  
English—most conservative  
Australians—most sporting  
Hungarians—most musical  
Irish—most religious  
Spanish—most hospitable  
Italians—most romantic  
Germans—most methodical

To what extent has America capitalized such human resources as are indicated by these traits? Extend the list to other groups not mentioned.

12. Organize an XYZ club, as Mr. Adamic proposes (you will find suggestions for organizing in Chapter XIV).

13. Students of society often assert that the trouble with plans for Americanization is the speed with which the foreign born adopt our ways of living and both discard and forget the ways of their native countries. This point was mentioned in Chapter II. Your XYZ club may discover many foreign customs, arts, and crafts that might produce a better balance during the change.

14. A second difficulty with Americanization plans is alleged to be that such plans do not include native-born Americans. If you were a member of a committee on the Americanization of Americans, how could you use the points stated in this chapter as a part of your program? Would you encourage individual differences? (Here is a warning from Will Rogers: "Americans are getting like a Ford car—they all have the same parts, the same upholstery, and make exactly the same noises.")

15. Make a list of occupations in which you are interested. Select at least one of these occupations for special consideration in each of the five ways described under the topic "Capitalizing Through Guidance."

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# UNIT III

## TYPES OF PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT





THE GROWING COMPLEXITY OF LEARNING PROBLEMS

## CHAPTER VIII

# Learning as Personal Adjustment

### I. WHAT IS EFFECTIVE LEARNING?

THE effective learner saves himself much time, effort, and money, and also gains a great advantage in the ceaseless struggle of modern times. Our learning begins at birth and continues throughout life. We learn even in spite of ourselves. But although learning begins early and extends throughout life, and although much of it takes place without conscious effort, people of about the same ability differ greatly in the effectiveness of their learning. To learn easily, you need a healthy physique and a keen brain—the bases of learning—and you need also a clear understanding of how to learn. You can learn how to learn.

*Effective learning consists of definite, progressive, and controlled adjustments to a changing environment.* “Progressive” here means that the adjustments are not merely makeshifts, but rather that they are made to fit the definite aims of the learner. The changes are under control and can be guided definitely.

The extent to which people are forced to learn varies both with the person and with the time in which he lives. First, the individual himself may determine the extent to which he will learn. For example if I decide to move from a quiet, rustic community where life has changed but little for many decades, to a large city, I must learn many

new adjustments in order to survive. This does not imply that city life is better or more difficult than country life. However the fact remains that great differences exist between the different places in the amount to which a person is forced to adapt himself to new situations. No one would question that there are many things to be learned on a farm; many adjustments would be necessary, also, if I should move from the city to the country. Such a change would require me to understand the cycle of farm life and the best methods of performing farm duties. You may say, therefore, that the difference between farm and city learning is a difference in the kinds of adjustments to be learned and not a difference in their number. Another way in which a person may determine the extent of the learning required of himself is by his vocational choice. Some vocations require much more preparation than others.

Second, the extent to which learning is necessary varies with the time in which a person lives. Take different historical eras as examples. The man of today, to be well adjusted, must understand the use of many more devices than the man of a thousand or six thousand years ago. In mechanical affairs alone, the extent of learning needed for satisfactory adjustment is enormous. Why is this true? Why should we say that life is so much more perplexing today than it was years ago? Probably human nature is the same and always will be. The jealous lover of today probably feels much like the jealous lover of ancient times. The angry man today exhibits the same violent behavior as the angry man of years ago. But when the man of today rises in the morning, he shaves with a mechanical apparatus called a razor, reads a newspaper written in entirely symbolical terms, drives to work in a complicated contrivance called an automobile, follows a



complex system of traffic signals in his driving, tries to avoid hitting pedestrians who dodge back and forth in front of him, and so on—he lives a life that is more complex than the life of no more than a century ago.

We may argue that man in the old days had to achieve a higher grade of learning because so little was known. We may say that his learning was harder because he had less with which to work. This argument is only partly true. What actually happened was this: Earlier people mastered the little that was known and if that was not sufficient for their needs, they perished. Pioneers with new solutions for ancient problems, such as drought and plague, often met prejudices and other difficulties that were too great to overcome.

The task of the educated man of modern times is a different one. True, he still faces many baffling problems, and he still has to readjust himself by discovering new and better solutions to these problems. But for the most part, modern man must learn solutions which science has proved already—solutions which are so varied and extensive that they require much time and his best effort to master.

The reason for the vastness of our modern problem of learning is easy to find. Day after day, year after year, century after century, the human race has added to its store of information for advancement and betterment. This mass of knowledge is our social heritage: Society has conserved and passed it down to us. Some of it is preserved in books and libraries. It grows and grows. Little, if any, of it is preserved in the bodies of individuals from one generation to another. The baby today begins with no better equipment than a baby of a thousand years ago. He is born ignorant of automobiles, electricity, elevators,

razors, and the hundreds of other things about which modern man must learn. He is born with ability to learn, and that is all. Thus we can see the high value and the increasing need of being able to learn rapidly and correctly. We have the task of mastering an ever-increasing amount of valuable and necessary, but complicated, knowledge. Effective learning is man's only way of adjusting himself to the complex modern world.

## 2. GETTING YOURSELF READY TO LEARN

For many centuries men have disagreed about the part which growth plays in learning. Each of us, however, knows something about growth. If you are one of the few people who can remember early childhood, perhaps you can recall the time before you could walk. Before you had grown to a certain size and age, walking was beyond your power, no matter how hard you tried. After you had grown a while, however, you were able to walk. But you could not ride a bicycle. That required still more growth and still more practice in co-ordinating your muscles. Growth is necessary for developing the physique. And except for air, food, and water, the total possibilities for physical growth are born in man.

If learning were only growth, and if growth were automatic, the burden upon learners and teachers would be slight. But although common sense tells us that the ability to do certain things depends on growth, it also tells us convincingly that planned, directed learning is needed. You need not think twice to realize that you could never learn the multiplication tables by simply waiting for growth. Another example is found in smoking. Many young people are told by their parents that children must

not smoke until they grow up. Sometimes children think that parents are inconsistent if the parents themselves smoke. But this is not the case. In the case of smoking, growth and maturity not only give better judgment about indulging in such conduct, but growth also gives bodily maturity to resist ill effects.

You can learn things well only when you are ready to learn them. Your growth assists in making you ready. Your activity also helps to make you ready, for by your activity, you get practice in doing many things. As a small child your almost constant chattering was an activity that helped to make you ready to read. Later your reading activity made you ready to get ideas from books. Your activity in getting ideas from books helps you now to think fairly clearly about many of your present problems. Your readiness for today's lessons depends, therefore, on two things—your previous growth and your previous activity. Later you will see that your readiness depends also on the quality of your intelligence.

What, you may ask, are some of the other ways in which you can get yourself ready to learn? We shall describe five things for you to do.

(1) *Be sure that your body is in the best possible condition.* Often the body limits a person's learning more than it should. The physiological limit is not a fixed thing that never can be changed. For instance your limit is lower when you are fatigued than when you are refreshed. An infected tooth may limit anyone severely. To find out what you need to know about your body you should go to a specialist. One of the most needless fears is the fear of physicians and dentists. You should visit them regularly. They are friendly people who try to make you as healthy as possible. The less often you visit them, the more painful

may be the visits that you do make. Many other people, including your parents and teachers, can aid you to get your body in its best possible condition. School nurses and well-trained teachers of physical education and home economics are experts who can help you conveniently from day to day. In addition, you yourself can find out a great deal by studying the effects of food, sleep, and exercise upon your body. Find out how to fit your body for your work, and do your best to keep it in the best condition.

(2) *Be sure that your mental condition is as good as you can make it.* You have just read that you can learn most easily and most effectively when you are mentally ready to learn. Your mental readiness to learn usually means that you are mature enough for a particular problem and that you are interested in it. Mental readiness means also that you have sufficient knowledge and skill to understand what you are to learn. These three things—maturity, interest, and background of knowledge and skill—can be developed. If you become interested in learning, the maturity and background are likely to come as a matter of course. The question is: How can you develop interest?

All of us can recall the atmosphere in school the day before a crucial athletic contest in basketball or football. The air is charged with excitement. Everyone is wondering what chance our team has. The members of the team, realizing their grave responsibility, go about as if the weight of the world rested upon their shoulders. Who can remember such a state of excitement and hushed anxiety preceding the algebra or history examination? There are no pep rallies for the pupils who are to take the algebra test the next day. We say, then, that interest is high toward athletics and low toward algebra. Sometimes when we get

a little older it is hard to discover or understand the interests of our own high school age, because our school subjects, even those like algebra, history, and so on, probably have contributed more to our success in the long run than our exciting participation, either as actor or spectator, in athletic contests. Let us try to see what the difference is, and the possible ways in which we can increase our interest in things which are unquestionably valuable but less engaging.

Notice, first of all, that what is best for our welfare is not always interesting and exciting. This is unfortunate, because an almost ideal state of affairs would exist, as far as learning is concerned, if welfare and interest always came together. Since the best things are not always the most interesting, we must find ways of cultivating an interest in worthy pursuits—for learning which takes place under stress of excitement or interest is better and more lasting, as we shall see presently. Otherwise it would be proper for us simply to grit our teeth and do whatever has to be done.

Excitement adds to interest, but learning is not always thrilling in itself. Fortunately, however, we can attach excitement to things or situations which ordinarily would not possess it. This is a seemingly artificial but valuable process. Excitement is generally the result of interference: Interest usually is aroused by an obstacle which we think we can overcome. Trying to overcome the obstacle becomes a game. (However unconquerable obstacles tend rather to discourage than to stimulate.) Therefore if we can find suitable obstacles and make a game of the affair, we are likely to arouse our own excitement and interest in learning.

Consider the process as it works in a French class. It is

possible in language classes to play games. For example the boys can be teamed against the girls in a game of French verb forms. This introduces friendly rivalry and excitement, and many language teachers use this device effectively. Another instance can be found in the contests sponsored by popular magazines. In these contests the valuable prize is one source of motivation, but so also is the competition with hundreds of other people. There is further "borrowed" excitement in that the prize itself often stands for a situation which is exciting. For example if the prize is a trip to the Orient, the prospect of adventure is carried over into whatever activity must be accomplished if we are to win.

It often happens that an uninviting task becomes more interesting as soon as we begin it. We start to learn because we are compelled to do so, but before we have gone far, a definite interest is aroused. This happens frequently to anyone who succeeds. Success leads to interest, because success is rewarded by social approval and pleasing situations. Lack of interest often is due to sheer ignorance and prejudice. The least that can be done by anyone who respects his own mental progress or who has an urge to be happy in the world is to approach any problem with an open mind. Hearsay about a school subject may prejudice him against it and lower his attention, whereas actual work in the same subject, if successful, may produce the opposite effect.

Thousands of people are not interested in their work and are unnecessarily unhappy about it. Granted that many are not in a position in which they can be supremely contented, still a lack of interest is often inexcusable. It is far better to abandon, even at some sacrifice, a vocation that cannot possibly become interesting than it is to live a life

of drudgery. But it is still better to "learn to like" a vocation if it must be followed. Students are often dissatisfied and disinterested in subjects which they are compelled to pursue in school. They would do better and be happier if an honest effort were made to cultivate a desire to know something about these subjects. This possibility is aptly illustrated by the case of a boy who failed in algebra once and was forced to repeat it. At first the repetition seemed likely to yield an even lower grade. A girl to whom the boy was strongly attracted chanced to be in the second class. She placed more value upon mental achievement, especially in algebra, than did the boy. She made clear to him that part of her esteem depended on his giving a respectable account of himself in the algebra class. Stimulated by an artificial but effective motive, the boy earned the highest grade in the class. Unfortunately we cannot develop a situation like this for all pupils who are weak in algebra.

The practical points concerning interest can now be summarized as follows: (1) Train yourself to approach new situations with an open mind. This is within your control. (2) Acquire a reasonable amount of knowledge about any field of learning before you condemn it as lacking interest or excitement. Chess is often regarded as a tame, quiet, unexciting game. But chess players who really know the game get so excited that they are often on the verge of nervous prostration, although onlookers may assume that nothing unusual is taking place. (3) Do not compare unfavorably less interesting with more interesting things. Make the more interesting thing depend on your doing the less interesting. This will associate the two. For example do not complain because it is more entertaining to go to a motion-picture show than to do your history lesson.

Promise yourself the picture show if you do the history lesson, and then stick to your promise. (4) Set your aims according to your capacities as nearly as you know them. You will be more likely then to achieve the success which leads to enthusiasm. (5) Associate with talented people who are likely to stimulate you. If you follow these five points, your mental condition will be about as good as you can make it.

(3) *Analyze your performance.* Sometimes by analyzing your method of work, you can find errors that may be remedied. Later you may find vast improvements in your learning. The expert can help a great deal in this scrutiny, for he is almost always a keen analyst of methods of work. Comparison of yourself with others is also useful, if you view yourself impersonally in making the comparison. In Chapter VI a list of points was given for such an analysis. The points that seem most important to you should be emphasized in your effort to get ready to learn. This brief discussion of analysis of your performance will be continued further in the present chapter in the discussion of trial-and-error learning.

(4) *Get the best early training possible.* Go to the best school that you can and go early. The reason for this advice is that *experiments prove that nothing is harder than "unlearning" and relearning.* It is a fundamental error in learning to get cheap early training and then to spend the last year or two of education on expensive training. It does not work. The early training acts as a hindrance rather than a preparation.

### 3. OUR AIMS IN LEARNING

Of Thomas Edison it is said that his procedure was always the same. He began by deciding exactly what he



expected to do. Always the first step was to determine his aim. At times he attempted to improve a device already in existence which had proved unsatisfactory because of its crudeness. This was his procedure with the stock market ticker, the telephone, the typewriter, and many other devices. At other times he launched upon an almost entirely new venture, as in the case of the motion picture.

This procedure of Thomas Edison brings us directly to our present problem of aims in learning. Edison learned how to refine existing devices and how to discover new ones. But he also, it is important to note, always first determined the aim of his effort.

Analysis has been made in a previous chapter of *why* people do things. Motives are closely related to the aims of learning. We do things generally to improve our adjustment to the world. It has been said that learning is adjustment. The purposes of doing things in general are the same as the purposes of learning.

Notice, at the outset, that effective learning is focused upon a definite aim. Though sometimes the purpose is not expressed in words, it is always implied. We shall center our discussion of the aims of learning around three points: (1) maintenance of life, (2) self-improvement, and (3) social welfare.

(1) *Maintenance of life.* Among many lower animals almost the whole of life is spent in learning how to maintain themselves by getting necessary food, escaping hardships, or avoiding enemies. Not only must the deer fight starvation, storms, and disease, but also it must learn how to avoid the hunter. Hunters know how well wild animals have learned that lesson. Before they have had any bitter experiences with men, many wild animals are easily approached by human beings. But after such experiences

even large animals become extremely wary. These cautions animals must learn.

With human beings, particularly in civilized communities, the extent to which learning aims merely for the maintenance of life is apparently smaller. But this aim never completely disappears. Even today our President states that one of the chief purposes of our national government is the protection of citizens from starvation. In the richest country in the world we still have the same aim as the wild animal in the forest. The maintenance of life now receives greater attention in schools and elsewhere than it formerly did. Consequently when we have a flood or some other disaster, far fewer people perish, for they have been trained to cope with such emergencies.

Perhaps we should not claim even today that the preservation of life is any less an aim of learning than formerly. For one thing, civilization carries with it diseases that endanger human life. We must find preventive and curative measures, both as individuals and as communities. Again, the pace of modern life is so rapid that many cannot tolerate it. This is genuinely a matter of the maintenance of life. To combat mental diseases we must learn mental hygiene, to which a later chapter is devoted. Consider further the number of people who are killed yearly by automobiles. Automobiles are far more dangerous today than Indians ever were. So even today the sheer maintenance of existence is one of the chief aims of learning. This is obvious in the life of the young child. It must learn that fires burn, that knives cut, that falls break bones, that some things are not good to eat, and so on. This is the primer of self-preservation, a primer which gradually becomes a library.

Society follows the pattern of the individual in learning

how to maintain itself. It sets up special classes of people for its own protection. When we meet a problem, such as a disease which threatens life, we call a physician, who has made a business of learning about disease. When we go swimming at a bathing beach, we are likely to find a lifeguard, who is an excellent swimmer, to aid us if we cannot take care of ourselves in the water. Hunters are told to wear red hats, so that they will not shoot one another. Drivers hold out their left arms when they turn a corner, so that they will not be hit from behind. Examples of this aim of learning may be enumerated without end. But in spite of all the training now given as safety education, people are drowning every year, hunters are still shooting one another, and hundreds of thousands are being injured and killed by automobiles. We have only partially attained the aim of learning to maintain our own lives and to help the other person preserve his.

(2) *Self-improvement*. A member of modern society need not spend all his time in self-preservation. Time can and should be spared for self-improvement. Now, particularly, when leisure is abundant for many people, self-improvement is a prominent aim in learning. When men had to work sixteen hours a day and were so tired at the end of the day that they could scarcely move, one could not expect further effort from them toward self-improvement in reading, music, art, and so forth. But with the increase of leisure, self-improvement as an aim of learning has gained significance. Many activities of schools are directed toward this aim. Every person should include in his activities for self-improvement, (a) reading in many general fields, such as science, literature, politics, and (b) a hobby that requires vigorous physical activity. You may wish to add others.

(3) *Social welfare.* To a great extent, as a person progresses, he improves society. A society composed of perfect people would itself be perfect. Since no such society exists, however, people must learn ways in which they can contribute to social welfare. This is not always easy for we are not born socially minded; indeed the child is naturally self-centered.

When we try to learn how to contribute our part to social welfare, we can do no better than to take the Golden Rule as our guide. Throughout the centuries, it is true, men have failed to teach themselves or other men the practical value of this rule. But business is now beginning to appreciate the value of the service idea when honestly applied. The industry that first made a thoroughgoing application of the principle of service profited immensely thereby. Today you can drive into a gasoline station and have your tires inflated, your windshield cleaned, your radiator filled, and numerous other services performed, free of charge, and then go to another station to buy your gasoline. But people do not do so. They buy, almost in every case, where they have received the service. This aim of learning—contribution to social welfare—is much easier to state than it is to achieve. But if we can ever teach one generation to think of serving others as well as serving themselves, many social evils will vanish as if by magic.

#### 4. TYPES OF LEARNING

Various types of learning are needed to achieve various adjustments. We shall consider five types of learning: (1) motor learning—the learning of skill; (2) acquiring knowledge—memorizing; (3) problem solving—learning by reasoning; (4) social learning—learning to get along with

other people; and (5) emotional learning—learning to direct and control our feelings. Presently we shall consider each kind of learning separately. Before so doing, however, we shall say a word about the types of intelligence that make these types of learning possible.

Evidence seems to show that there are three general forms of intelligence underlying the five types of learning: mechanical intelligence, abstract intelligence, and social intelligence. Mechanical intelligence consists of sound bodily equipment for mechanical tasks, keen sense organs, fast responses, and so on. Abstract intelligence consists of a sensitive nervous system, many ready connections in the brain, and so on. Social intelligence is harder to define, but it seems to consist of a complex equipment which enables a person to like to be with people and to get along well with them. The person with mechanical intelligence is supposed to be able to master a skill quickly, and so he excels in motor learning. The person with abstract intelligence is supposed to be able to acquire knowledge quickly and to reason clearly. The person with social intelligence is supposed to be able to understand social situations easily and adjust himself quickly and effectively to them. Inseparable from these types of intelligence are our feelings or emotions, which drive us to act as we do.

(1) *Motor learning.* In motor learning or acquiring skill, one of the most useful factors is a correct first performance. This, as you will see, is essential because of the difficulty of reforming a habit once it has been set. Next comes the careful practice which makes the master.

Since the development of skills depends largely on active sense organs, it is important that, before you undertake to learn a skill, you discover whether you have the adequate sensory equipment. You should have your pitch dis-

crimination tested if you expect to become a skilled musician. If you wish to become a locomotive engineer you must be certain that you are not color blind. For a baseball player speed of reaction is required. You use motor learning in many places in school, such as laboratories and manual arts shops. It is possible now to test a person in his aptitudes for many types of occupation, and anyone who plans to enter specialized professions should have himself tested for his probable success.

(2) *Acquiring knowledge.* If you meet a person today and think that you have learned his name but cannot remember it when you meet him again tomorrow, you have done badly at memorizing. You have not put things together effectively—you have achieved only a weak linking of things that should be chained together. All the memory courses which you see advertised are efforts to improve such learning. The great philosopher of ancient Greece, Aristotle, showed that we “put things together” mentally, and he described the way in which we do so. Aristotle maintained that *things or events which are experienced close together in either space or time are likely to be associated*. For example if you see the Latin word *sub* along with the English word *under*, you associate the two words and learn that *sub* means *under*. If, while you are driving, you should see a red flag along the highway, then you will go more slowly—because you have associated red flags with danger, you have already seen such flags and possible danger together. Unfortunately such learning is not always good. Some people have seen a black cat cross their path and have had a misfortune soon afterward. They jump to the conclusion that the cat was a warning. In associative learning, therefore, we must use our heads as well as our eyes

and try to put things together mentally only when they belong together.

Nearness in time and space combined with repetition is the secret of the fixing process. We may plan to make associations consciously, or they can be made in spite of us. If we order a dish of vegetables in a restaurant and it is served with a dead insect we may dislike that type of food the next time it is served us. We have made an association, although on the second occasion we may not remember the cause of the dislike.

(3) *Problem solving*. This type of learning resembles associative learning. But it goes much further, for it enables us to solve problems and to be original or "creative." In such learning we always use our heads instead of jumping to conclusions. Above all, such learning takes notice of small details. It uses combinations and recombinations of situations to form an efficient adjustment. A good detective illustrates this type of learning. The detective faces a problem, say the discovery of a murderer. If someone who has seen the murderer at work can be located and led to testify, the solution of the problem is simple. However such easy discoveries are seldom made, and the detective must use other intellectual devices to solve his problem. To this end he uses clues.

But clues seldom give a complete picture; anyone using them—whether he is a scientist, a detective, or a schoolboy—must guess or infer the complete picture from the partial one presented by the clues. This process requires orderly thought and the "weighing" of many small details. Often it leads only to a guess the truth of which must be tested. If the guess is found to be true in many cases, it will then be called a general principle; that is, a principle that

works in similar situations. For example people have noticed that an apple strikes the ground harder if it falls from a high tree than if it falls only a few inches. This situation must have led someone to guess that the farther anything falls, the faster it falls. By testing this guess, someone found it true. Then it became a general principle. Later someone found that a falling object gains a certain amount of speed every second that it falls. Then it became possible to state this principle more exactly, as you will find it in any physics textbook. From examples such as these, you can see that problem solving is the basis of scientific thinking. Things learned in this way are likely to be remembered. Even if they are partially forgotten, they can be recalled if we take time to think through the situation. For this reason, learning by problem solving is usually effective learning.

(4) *Social learning*. Everyone has at one time or another suffered from social embarrassment and has wished that he were better adjusted socially. Mere lack of skill in handling knives, forks, and spoons may cause embarrassment at a dinner, as may also inability to remember the name of the hostess. Fortunately everyone has enough intelligence to learn to do better if he is well taught. Social learning depends on a combination of all the types of intelligence. Our social competence comes from social learning, which is acquired by studying social situations and by practice in getting along with people. It is closely related to emotional learning.

(5) *Emotional learning*. Few people would control and direct their feelings if someone else did not make them do so. If you have ever tried to play with a child that has always had its own way, you have surely realized how necessary emotional learning is. Such a child is usually



petted too much by its parents, and is likely to have been protected from the rough-and-tumble life that seems necessary for everyone's development. Its feelings are tender and easily hurt, because its social climate, as discussed in Chapter II, has been too mild. The bully is another kind of person whose emotional learning has been neglected in about the same way. Many of our childish desires and feelings must be refined, if we are ever to grow up.

As just stated, our social climate greatly affects this kind of learning. But we can use our own intelligence to help ourselves. We can "look" at ourselves, and by reasoning, we can see ourselves somewhat as others see us. If we do this we are almost certain to find that our childish feelings are unsafe guides to behavior. Then if we apply our reasoning, we can change or refine our feelings and desires—we can learn to desire what is proper for us to desire. We then acquire what is called a will to be fair to ourselves and to other people. This kind of learning is especially important, as we shall see later in the chapters on morals and manners and personal development.

## 5. POSSIBILITIES OF IMPROVING LEARNING

In discussing ways to improve our learning habits, we must remember that learning is of many kinds, including learning in arithmetic, history, geography, and other school subjects, and also in salesmanship, athletics, acting, and so on. Anyone who has been a salesman, whether behind the counter selling merchandise or in such an occupation as selling stocks and bonds, knows that the beginner is at a tremendous disadvantage when competing with those who have developed an almost perfect system. In looking for possibilities of improving learning, you should

consider what you are likely to be in the future as well as what you are now.

The possibilities for improvement in learning can be approached from two directions. First, you can improve yourself by polishing and refining a technique which you already have. Second, and this second way is one to which we shall pay special attention, you can strive continuously to discover new ways of doing things, instead of merely refining the ways that you have already partially mastered. To make both points clear, let us consider transportation. Ways of transportation, like all other advances in human history, represent changes in learning. In the museum of transportation which Mr. Ford has erected in Detroit there are many samples of vehicles of the past. Each relic represents a step forward in man's learning to move more readily from place to place. Take the oxcart as an example of the first method of improvement in learning—the perfection of a technique that is already at our disposal. There were, to be sure, noticeable differences among oxcarts. Some had poorly rounded wheels. The axles were weak. The body was often too heavy for the axles and wheels. Men learned to change these things and make better oxcarts. They made the wheels more nearly round. They strengthened and improved the axles. They changed the crude chassis. These changes led to progress in transportation by oxcart. But even the most improved oxcart was still an oxcart.

Now we come to our second step. There came a time when men, by one means or another, discovered the combustion engine as a means of propelling vehicles. As compared with oxen, a gasoline motor is an entirely new source of power. Since the use of the earliest crude motors, they, too, have been altered as was the oxcart. Similarly within

the time of your own parents, the possibility of transportation by air was discovered. This also represented a new technique and new materials, rather than a change of an old vehicle. No matter how much you change the construction of a steam train, you will never have an airplane. New principles and techniques and materials had to be introduced and perfected for this new machine.

These facts about transportation have a direct application to your entire lives as you work out your own methods of adjustment. No matter what subject or vocation you are pursuing, you should ask yourselves two questions: Have I done as much as I possibly can to improve my learning methods? Are there any other completely different methods by which I might solve my problems better even than I can with my present improved method? Whenever a thoughtful person asks himself these questions, he finds defects to remedy, and he soon wishes to modify or make complete changes in his methods.

Obviously there are limits to any one person's improvement of his learning. There is, for example, the physiological limit. This comes partly from bodily structure, partly from energy output, and partly from other factors. An axiom among boxers illustrates the point: A good little man is better than a poor big man, but a good big man is better than either. The lightweight, even though a proficient boxer, is prevented by his physiological limitations from ever being able to best an equally proficient fighter who is much heavier and who has, therefore, fewer physiological limitations. But investigations show that this is not something we need worry about. Most people, through laziness or allied reasons, stop their improvement long before they reach their physiological limits. With most of us the possibilities for improvement in learning seem

almost unlimited. You will see this illustrated in a striking fashion when we consider the subject of reading.

## 6. MAKING YOUR LEARNING EFFECTIVE

In presenting ways to make learning effective, we are proposing no ironclad rules. The only certain rule about human conduct is, so to speak, that there are no rules. A way which makes your learning effective serves its purpose if it improves even slightly your understanding of human conduct.

(1) *Make effective habits.* Man has been described rightly as a creature of habits. Habits are energy savers. Our lives are organized on the basis of habits. For example most people have habitual signatures, which serve many purposes, especially that of identification. If everyone were to sign his name very differently each time he wrote it, transactions such as banking would be needlessly complicated. If we had to relearn all our daily habits every time we wished to do anything, our activities would be tremendously restricted.

Habit can be defined as a definite and uniform way of reacting in similar situations. However it must be remembered that no two reactions of the same person are *exactly* alike; likewise no two situations are *exactly* alike.

The origin of human habits is fairly easy to trace. Habit is based upon our tendency to solve problems with the least possible energy. Even a partially correct solution of a disturbing problem is likely to be repeated. In situations where it is difficult or impossible to react as we habitually do, serious mental upsets are likely to follow. Nervous breakdowns in human beings often come from inability to react to recurring problems according to habit. Baffled

and upset by the waste of energy that follows the breakdown of habits, people themselves break down.

Habit is both a boon and a bane. It is a boon because it saves valuable energy, thus allowing us to do many things readily without costly repetitions or energy-draining concentration. In addition to saving energy, effective habits save time. They usually enable us to speed up our work and they themselves often gain in efficiency at the same time. This represents a double saving.

A habit is sometimes a bane because it leads to fixed action in situations where conduct should be flexible. Habit is the foundation of many prejudices and narrow points of view. It is often the enemy of progress. It is often inefficient. The habitual use of an ineffective solution often stands in the way of the substitution of a much more effective solution. Habits, therefore, do not always speed up our work. College coaches sometimes have difficulty in securing the right "form" in a high school athlete, because he has established incorrect habits in his earlier practice. These earlier habits may have been fairly successful once, but now they block further progress. Too easily can we develop fixed habits unfit for changing conditions.

Habit is often not even a partially satisfactory solution, except perhaps to the mind alone. If it were, certain patent medicines would not sell so well as they do. For example there was the time when Uncle Henry's cold seemed to have been cured by Mefushky's Cold Tablets. Uncle Henry became a strong believer in the curative qualities of said tablets and recommended them to all members of his family. Some of his relatives took his recommendation seriously and bought many packages of the tablets. Taking them became a family habit, although they had

no connection with recovery from illness. The only possible value of such habits is the improvement of the mental attitude or morale of the person who has them. Nor is such an illustration fantastic. Mr. Stuart Chase and other competent investigators assure us that this type of habit costs the American public millions of dollars yearly.<sup>1</sup> Consequently some habits are called "bad." A bad habit is one in which the solution of a difficulty is ineffective. Such habits must be broken and new ones substituted. In our next discussion we shall show the importance of this.

A habit may be an effective solution of a problem at one time and not at another. No one blames a baby for crying when it is hungry. But if this conduct becomes too strongly fixed, as it does in some children, and if no other habit is substituted, it will interfere with the child's progress. Adults and adolescents who try habitually to gain their ends by tears are regarded as infantile, but they are treated in the opposite way from that in which the infant is treated when it tearfully pleads its case.

From such observations we derive three rules about our own habits: (1) Habits should be analyzed often to see whether they are correct and decisive solutions to problems; (2) outmoded habits should be dropped and better ones substituted; and (3) habits should be started correctly.

(2) *Break ineffective habits.* Practice usually makes a habit smooth and co-ordinated. But all people have habits that are ineffective in both quality and speed. Other habits are frowned upon by society and punished accordingly, because they are considered bad. Therefore a technique for destroying wrong habits is essential. This technique is sometimes called "reconditioning."

In general it is harder to break a habit than to form

<sup>1</sup> Chase, Stuart, *Your Money's Worth* (The Macmillan Company).

one. Hence, as just stated, first performances should be as nearly correct as possible in order to make relearning unnecessary. Professional coaches stress correct form during the early stages of training. But disturbing exceptions to this valid general principle seem to occur. Careful analysis, however, shows a reason for these apparent exceptions to the rule that it is harder to break a habit than to form one. For example a man may have locked his car door for years in a certain way. His habit is firmly fixed. But in a new model in which the door can be locked more easily, the key may be locked inside the car. To the man's annoyance, this happens once; but then the habit is broken. Why is the "fixed" habit so easily broken? Such a case seems to contradict the principle just stated. The explanation probably is that the new habit or new way of locking a car is much easier than the previous one. Hence, although unpleasant effects may accompany the change, it receives emotional strength from the man's typically human desire to do things in the easiest way.

To understand how to break habits, we must remember that a habit is not a simple act used for only a short time. Instead a habit fits into a series of acts, and it is fairly permanent. Every act is stimulated by a preceding act, and an attempt to break into this series of acts may interfere with later steps in the same series. Therefore one way to break habits is to locate the stimulations that start the series and to substitute a new response for the bad habit. For example if a person who is habitually profane when annoyed, counts ten instead of bursting into profanity, he places a block between the stimulation and the undesired habit. In this way the habit of profanity is often broken. Of course the counting itself has no merit, but the delay in responding allows time for thought. During

the delay the emotion leading to violent action fades rapidly.

Although habits seem to become more firmly fixed by practice, there are times when practice can be used to break them. A boy who is in the habit of shooting rubber bands at other pupils or the teacher is likely to lose interest in this sport if he is kept after school and required to shoot a thousand times at a mark on the blackboard. This, to be sure, does not contradict the principle that practice makes perfect; instead it shows that long-continued practice, especially when the boy wishes to be elsewhere, leads to unfavorable emotion for the habit. This unfavorable emotion, in turn, weakens the desire to carry on the habit.

Many habits can be broken by making them centers of attention. This is noticeable in social situations. If a man has the habit of swinging a watch chain while he is talking, he can be turned from this habit merely by a direct look from one of his listeners, even though nothing is said. The person who is unconsciously tapping his foot to the music in a theater may be turned from this delightful habit by a glare from the person who is sitting in front of him—though occasionally such public enemies are incurable by any devices whatsoever.

Since a habit is a part of an entire series of acts, it may be that only one or more of the parts of the series are incorrectly performed. If the complete habit is not a long series of acts, the whole series may be relearned. Frequently, however, a habit can be improved without eliminating the entire series. But reconditioning practice should begin at a point before the place where the change is to be made, rather than at the exact point where the part to be changed occurs. To practice only the new act by itself, and disregard the parts before and after it in the



series, is insufficient. For, later, when the whole series is run, the old ineffective response is likely to reappear. Especially under excitement or during fatigue, we are liable to lapse into an old habit. For example a boy who has learned a partially incorrect way of shooting baskets in basketball is likely to return to this method in the heat of a game, even though his coach has attempted to recondition his technique. The new response must become a dependable habit.

(3) *Use trial and error in learning when necessary.* You probably know the story of Robert Bruce, who, defeated, discouraged, and hiding from his enemies, watched the painful and patient efforts of a spider to weave a web. After many trials the spider succeeded. Bruce profited by the lesson and left us the saying, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." This story is an illustration of the value of persistence. It is also an illustration of the possibility of learning through trial and error. Although this method is generally regarded as an inferior form of learning, it is often our only means when we face a new situation. Even the scientist often begins an investigation by trying various solutions. His first attempt is generally a "trial" and it may well be an "error."

The amount of trial-and-error learning in a new situation is affected by both the *novelty* and *complexity* of the situation. If your automobile should stop at a time when no mechanic or assistance is available, you have a problem, new in proportion to your experience with automobiles. If you are inexperienced the chances are against your starting the car. You may open the hood and examine solemnly the inner parts of the auto, but almost everything that you see will be strange. If you are experienced, from having been stalled before and rescued by a mechanic,

you may have observed what he did to start the car. Perchance you even asked a few questions. You know that running out of gas stops the car; breaks in the ignition line do the same; water in the gas screen causes trouble; and so on. Hence the situation is not entirely novel to you. But suppose that when your car stalls, you try everything that has started the car before and still it does not go. Probably some simple thing, which is, however, a mystery to you, has gone amiss, or something too complicated for your slight experience has occurred. Perhaps a complex thing, such as the needle valve in the carburetor, is not working. Any such situation is likely to force you to resort to mere tinkering; that is, to trial and error.

Man, in trying to cope with certain problems, is often able to shorten his trial-and-error behavior when he faces a difficulty. Put a man, an ape, and a dog together in a cage from which it is possible to escape by tripping a certain lever, and the man will usually escape first. Man shortens his trial and error in most types of learning. However in finding solutions by the trial-and-error method when keenness of the senses is a factor, man is at a disadvantage. For example if a boy is lost in the woods, one way to find him would be to go back and forth across the area until the discovery. This would be trial and error. Another way would be to follow the child by the scent of his tracks. In this solution an animal would have an advantage because of its special ability. Generally, however, man has the advantage because of his superior mental endowment: He can think of more ways to try. Again, man's superior ability comes to his rescue in the form of *memory*. His ability to conserve experience gives him ready-made solutions to problems that he previously faced.

He also has a great advantage in his ability to preserve

written records and thus profit from the experience of others. If, every time a car stalled, one had to find out by trial and error what was wrong, the process would be tremendously inefficient and time-consuming. Fortunately instead of going through so many tedious processes, we can use the experience of other people. Hence a portion of our education consists of learning the results of the trial-and-error steps through which others have gone in making significant discoveries. Thus we can avoid these steps ourselves and make use of the discoveries of men who have long been dead.

In many situations, then, you must use trial and error because you know of no solution to the problems that arise. In these situations three rules are valuable: First, *do not repeat useless trials*. The person who is lost in the forest may be forced to use trial and error, especially if he is in strange country. Sometimes people who are lost, however, go over and over the same territory. This repetition of the useless or ineffective trial is not a way to solve a problem. It is like the method of the chicken which marches back and forth along a picket fence, thinking, apparently, that the pickets will have spread since its previous attempt to go through. Second, where possible, *keep a record of ineffective trials*. Edison once took a man into his laboratory and pointed to long tables covered with jars filled with chemicals. These jars, he explained, showed thousands of ways how *not* to make synthetic rubber. Edison kept records of all his trial-and-error attempts to solve his problems. In the same fashion, the person who is lost in the forest may blaze trees to keep himself from retracing his steps. Third, *analyze your errors to find a way to make the next trial successful*. This point has already been discussed.

(4) *Practice effectively*. Are four hours of steady practice

as effective as four one-hour periods a day for four days? Many people think that the answer is *Yes*, but the right answer is *No*. If you have analyzed your successes carefully, you will have found that your best and most permanent learning is done when you distribute your practice periods. When your practice is distributed, the results are not only more permanent, but the time for learning is reduced.

Cramming for examinations, a frequent practice in high school and college, is not morally wrong, but it is wasteful in most subjects. Students often think that they save time by last-minute cramming because the practice or study is done in only one day or one evening. Long periods of practice, however, are ineffectual because of fatigue as well as because of boredom. Many a student who has tried cramming and given it up admits that after ten or twelve hours of solid study everything seems to be a haze. His mind may still be at work, but it is likely to be working at something far away from his lesson. He is fatigued and bored. He is merely punishing himself for his earlier neglect.

There is doubt about what is the best length for practice or study periods. If one has acquired the knack of getting to work rapidly and does not require a ten- or fifteen-minute period of "fussing around," a half-hour session of study may be effective. As material can be most advantageously studied when broken up into natural units, this half-hour length of study period may be varied both up and down. Review periods may require even shorter lengths of time.

Although long periods of practice are desirable and justifiable in special types of practice, there are many situations in which shorter periods might at least be tried.

For example football practice, even in high school, is likely to extend over a period of two or three hours late in the day. If schedules would permit, it is likely that two one-hour periods of practice a day would be more effective than one two-hour period. In a sport like football, however, the difficulties involved in getting into uniforms, taking showers afterward, the shortness of the football season, and so on, make the shorter period inconvenient. Every person should experiment with himself to discover the length of study and review period that is best for him in each kind of learning situation.

By analyzing your own experience with practice or study periods, you will find that interest plays a part. When you are interested, time flies and you seem to be unfatigued. And so we can say that *the greater your interest the longer your effective practice period should be*. This is one reason why football practice periods can be longer than study periods. You can save time and reduce waste if you can get interested in whatever you try to learn. If you do this you can lengthen most of your study periods effectively.

(5) *Cultivate your memory*. You may have heard the statement, "He was born with a wonderful memory." This statement assumes that memory is a gift at birth. Careful observers of children as well as psychologists who have investigated children's abilities find evidence to support the statement: Some people are born with better equipment for memorizing than others. But a "good memory" is something more than a good equipment. A person whose memory is good usually has started life with superior equipment, but later he has also cultivated habits which have aided him in the effective use of this equipment.

Most of the habits or methods that aid in memorizing

and retaining what is memorized are included in other sections of this chapter. Recognizing, of course, that each person has his own equipment for memorizing and his own peculiar situations, we state these ten points as ways to help your memory:

1. Keep yourself in good trim, physically and mentally.
2. Get the meaning of what you memorize.
3. Be definite about your impressions.
4. Notice any details that you think helpful.
5. Be systematic.
6. Put together the things that seem to belong together.
7. Find the best time for memorizing.
8. Apply what you memorize.
9. Recall before too late (postponed reviews take more time than early reviews).
10. Memorize one thing or one set of things thoroughly before attempting something else that is closely similar.

(6) *Organize your learning.* Once upon a time in the dim days before exact history, there lived at Cumae, a town in Italy, so the story goes, a wonderful woman known as the Sibyl. The Sibyl dwelt in a gloomy cave within which was an opening. This led into the depths of the earth whence came strange sounds—voices which told the Sibyl about events destined to happen in the world. The Sibyl was respected and consulted even by the kings of Rome. But she was unsystematic and kept poorly organized records of what she heard. She would not be bothered with a filing system but wrote only on stray sheets of paper the prophecies as they rumbled forth from the earth. These papers she carelessly cast aside. Therefore when people came to her for help, she might or might not be able to find what they wanted, because the voices which spoke

so accurately of the future could not be summoned at will, but had to be heeded when they appeared. Whether the Sibyl was as unsystematic as she is said to have been, we are not certain, but one thing we do know—we need not go back to her time to find lack of organization in work.

Organization is absolutely necessary for successful living. Try to imagine what would happen if the spare-parts department of a large garage were without organization and an exact system. Soon the thousands of parts would be hopelessly mixed, and no one could find anything. To prevent this, every part of an automobile, even down to the smallest, has a number, and the numbers are systematically catalogued. The ordinary person, however, lacking the necessary external stimulation which is present in commercial fields, often becomes slipshod in his thinking and learning.

Organization as an aid to effective learning refers both to physical and mental affairs. A reasonable amount of organization of personal possessions and of work pays surprising dividends. Boys would not have to look for their caps every morning before they leave for school, if each were to have a definite place to keep his cap. The good workman has a definite place in his tool chest for each tool, because such organization of materials increases his speed of working.

To be sure organization can be carried to excess. Homes sometimes cease to be places of comfort and relaxation, because some member of the family gets disturbed if even the corner of a rug is out of place. A certain businessman discharges any employee who is found incorrectly filing even one letter. Such excess is an abuse of organization.

Organization of thought—planning—is demanded even more than organization of materials. Before you can study

certain problems effectively, you need to look ahead and make a plan. The plan that is chosen depends on the kind of information that you have or probably can get. Sometimes as in a mathematics problem, all the necessary information is given, and you may already know the rule for solving the problem. Here you need only to organize the information and proceed according to the rule. This plan works in most familiar situations. At other times, however, a plan for a solution is hard to make because important facts are missing. Certain gaps must be bridged either by guessing or by getting new facts. For example a man's dead body is found along a riverbank. At once you begin to plan a solution. First you report the case to a police officer. A glance at the body tells that the man was probably well to do. The officer immediately thinks of robbery and begins a search. He finds a large sum of money in one of the dead man's pockets. This eliminates the first guess. Further search is needed. The man's clothes indicate that he was drowned—or was he murdered by some enemy and thrown in the river? One cause after another may be eliminated until finally a doctor is called and discovers that the man died of a weak heart and probably fell into the river. This plan was the trial-and-error method, which was followed until wrong guesses were eliminated and the correct solution was found.

Three points need special attention in organizing your learning: (1) Organize your surroundings and working materials; (2) effective organization is often simple—the purpose of your organization should be to simplify your life; and (3) organize your thoughts according to the kind of situation that you face. *Effective organization takes effort but it also saves effort.*

(7) *Apply what you learn.* One of the easiest things for



you to do is to apply what you have learned. Indeed you simply cannot help doing so. For example if you have learned that oysters are not likely to be wholesome during certain months of the year, the most elementary common sense would cause you to apply this knowledge the next time you dined at a restaurant serving sea food. In applying your learning, however, it is important that you guard against applying it where it does not fit. At certain street corners in some cities, an automobile driver is permitted to turn right on a red light. But the driver who has this knowledge must make sure that he tries to apply it only at the proper corners. Otherwise he will be evading not only one of the first principles of making learning effective, but also the traffic policeman.

Another difficulty in applying our learning comes to almost everyone. This will be suggested later in Chapter XIII in the discussion of the partnership of pupils and teachers. If what is learned in a school subject such as mathematics comes entirely from books, you may see little relationship of your school learning to your out-of-school life. But if you can learn in mathematics how to show the history of football in your school, a new application comes at once. For example if your team has played eighty games in ten years and lost only twenty, your mathematics can help you to show this by a graph: Let one inch stand for ten games; then eight inches will stand for the eighty games, and two inches for the twenty games lost. Next you can blacken two inches of the graph, leaving a square space for the number 20. Finally write the number 20 in the square space and the number 60 in the unblackened space for games won. Other graphs can be made to show yardage gained or lost by center plunges, forward passes, and fumbles; gains from penalties; and so on. Such graphs,

when properly named, can show many facts about your team and they show one of many ways to apply what you have learned in high school mathematics.

Applications of high school and college learning to life are often not as easy to make as the more immediate types of application just mentioned. The reason is that there is a wide gap between much that is found in books and much of what we find out of school. Teachers as well as pupils face this difficulty. One teacher of physics asked a university professor how to prove that high school physics could be applied to anything outside the school. The professor asked whether the teacher could arrange for a little target practice. He could. "Very good," said the professor, "teach half your pupils what seems to happen to the shape of a pole when part of it is in a pool of water. After they have learned that the pole seems to be bent sharply and why this is so, have all the pupils shoot at the end that is in the water." This was done. The first shots, of course, missed the target, but the pupils who had studied the situation, quickly applied their learning and won the shooting match. This simple proof taught the pupils that their learning could be applied if they tried to apply it.

By applying what you learn you can save yourself much time and trouble. The points to watch are these: (1) *Be sure that your learning is correct and sufficient*; (2) *be sure that your learning fits the case to which it is applied*; and (3) *apply your learning whenever you can*.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. If it is true that everyone is forced to learn, why have schools?

2. Here are three possibilities in learning: (1) learning much

about a few things; (2) learning little about many things; (3) learning much about one or two things and as much as possible about a number of others. Which of these possibilities do you prefer? Assume that it is impossible to pick all three.

3. Do you think it would be well if babies were born able to remember some of the things that their parents, grandparents, and other ancestors had learned? How would this simplify their learning? Would it complicate their learning?

4. Describe a situation in which someone tried to learn something before he was ready to learn. Which of the four kinds of readiness were missing in that situation?

5. How can a person increase his interest in what he is doing? How does interest affect learning?

6. Make a list of five school subjects and show how each subject meets or does not meet the aims of learning. Show how each of the following activities meets or does not meet these aims: outdoor games, going to church, going to movies, making a speech, playing in an orchestra, managing a factory.

7. Name five types of learning. Try to show that a person should be effective in all types. Is it true that most people are?

8. Give a practical example of the principle that the way in which we learn a thing first is likely to remain with us in spite of our efforts to change it later.

9. Name some situations in which acting upon the basis of habit would be an advantage and some in which it would be a disadvantage.

10. Considering the breaking of habits, can you see why college coaches like to have high school coaches use college systems of football playing?

11. Why do you suppose that many things do not appeal to us when we first approach them but become fascinating after we have learned about them? Or do you believe that this is the case?

12. What ways do you have for improving your learning? Are you the sort of person who is always trying to make a better oxcart, or do you try to drive an automobile instead?

13. What are some of the ways to reduce trial-and-error learning in everyday life?

14. Why do you suppose it is that processes that are similar often interfere with each other in learning?

15. For one week score yourself day by day on each of the seven points for making your learning effective. If you are in school you can keep score of your method of learning any one of your school subjects. At the end of the week make a brief statement of the value of each point.

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## CHAPTER IX

# Efficient Reading as Personal Adjustment

### I. READING IS A NECESSARY PERSONAL SKILL

WE ALL acquire certain abilities that seem so much a part of us that we are tempted to think that we have always had them. Reading is such an ability; indeed some people can hardly remember when they could not read. Likewise after we learn to read, we think that our own way of reading is the best way simply because we are used to it or because we know no other way.

As a social skill reading is surpassed only by speech. An outstanding distinguishing feature of the human race from all animals is the ability to use spoken words and writing. Spoken language is the older member of this pair, but in modern society writing is necessary. From the printed page we get many of our ideas of both the past and the present. Modern society demands that we read effectively.

### 2. DIFFERENCES IN READING ABILITY

Although ability to read is a necessary personal skill, many people are sadly deficient in it. When investigations are made of speed and comprehension in reading, the results are alarming. Enormous differences exist among

even intelligent people in their ease of reading. If these differences were unavoidable and due to some mysterious talent, then we might be justified in behaving as most of us do now toward them; that is, with indifference, resignation, or neglect.

But listen! *The majority of people do not read nearly so rapidly as they could if they spent a little time and effort on the improvement of their reading.* Furthermore the striking differences in ability to read cannot be accounted for solely by better intelligence or longer schooling. Among the best readers, it is true, size of vocabulary plays a leading part. But the difficulties that puzzle ordinary readers are the result simply of poor reading habits.

Rapid readers cover five to ten times as many pages as slow readers. This means that if two people sit down to read a book one may finish in a tenth of the time taken by the other. For every hour that the rapid reader spends, the slow reader must spend nine additional hours. The rapid reader almost always understands better what he reads than the slow reader. The common saying that the slow reader never forgets what he reads is only for the comfort of those who are slow. It is untrue. Instead one who reads rapidly is likely to remember more, page by page, than one who reads slowly. This does not mean that people who fairly race over material without getting its meaning are efficient readers. The best readers see quickly, grasp meaning rapidly, and reason while they read. Slow readers creep along at a rate of about one hundred words a minute. The average reader covers from a hundred and forty to a hundred and sixty words a minute. Ordinarily rapid readers read at about double the speed of a slow reader. Very rapid readers may cover from five hundred to a thousand words a minute. These reading rates are

true only when the material read is fairly easy for the reader. They are not true for technical or new material.

These differences in reading rates show clearly that reading is a much neglected art. Where does the neglect occur? First, reading is sometimes neglected in the early grades. Second, many pupils are promoted to the higher grades before they can read the books for the lower. Thousands of high school pupils are sixth-grade readers. Most college students who fail are poor readers—they read less efficiently than many eighth-grade children. They were promoted without having had special training in reading and they failed to teach themselves to read, as many good readers have done. Reading may be fairly easy for a pupil in the lower grades, but very hard for the same pupil in high school or college. The reason is that lower-grade books tell about simple things in simple language, while high school and college books tell about more complex things in more complex language. The problem of high school and college reading is first, to learn many new words, and second, to follow thoughts all the way through long sentences and paragraphs. The main point about all reading is to get the meaning.

A person can learn to read easy books merely by reading them. But to learn to read difficult books with speed and a high level of understanding requires persistent training in reading. This fact leads us to the next place where reading is neglected.

The third place where reading is neglected is in the later grades and in high school. Definite training is needed in these later years. Even when basic habits of reading are well learned, they must be practiced, and in addition, more advanced habits must be developed.

Reasons for the unnecessarily large differences in reading



skill are found in most schools. In a later section we shall examine some of the common defects in reading and describe corrective practice. Fortunately people can learn to read well even after they have completed their elementary school education.

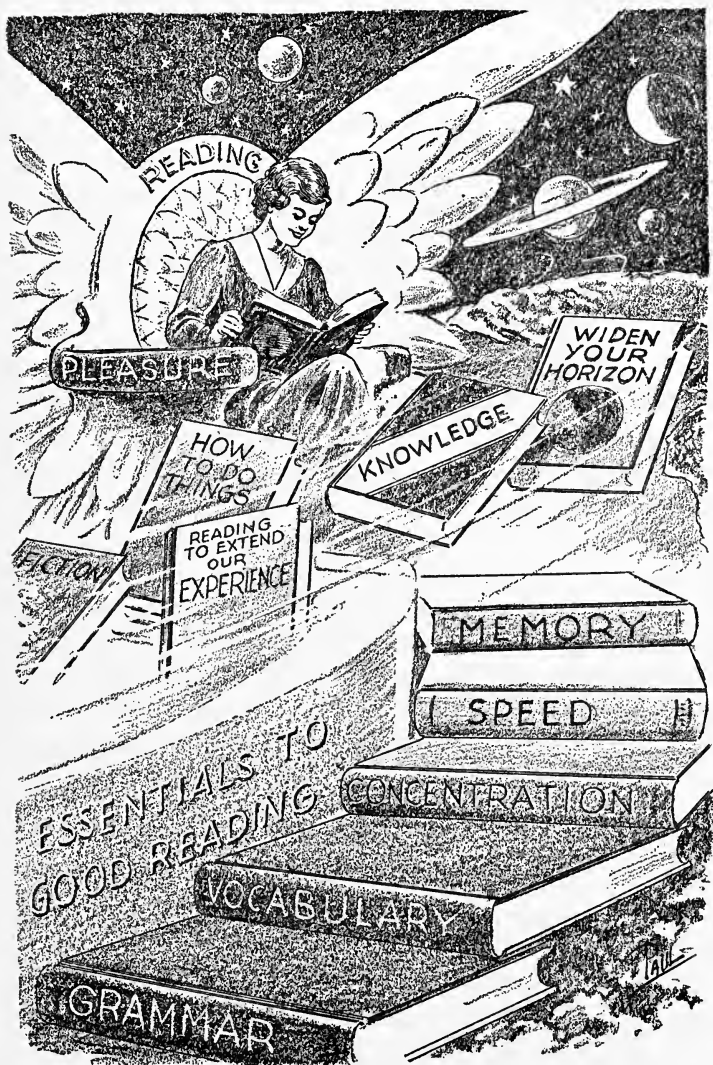
### 3. TYPES OF READING

We have already hinted that effective reading demands more than a single ability used in exactly the same way in all types of situations. Obviously there is a contrast between simply glancing hurriedly over the evening newspaper and analyzing a geometry problem. The proficient reader has at least four types of reading ability, all requiring the same basic habits, but all different in purpose.

Type 1. *We read to extend our experience.* We cannot experience directly everything that interests us. But indirectly, by reading, we can travel to all nations of the earth, we can look into the deepest and darkest mines, we can watch inventors and explorers at work, and we can see all kinds of industry everywhere. In fact we can experience almost everything, if we have books and if we can read.

Type 2. *We read to learn how to do things.* In school we read to learn how to solve problems in algebra, how to bake a cake, or how to make a table. Out of school we read to find how to get ready for a camping trip, how to farm, or how to take care of an automobile. This type of reading is exacting because the directions for doing things must be followed to the letter.

Type 3. *We read to add to our knowledge.* Such reading is often like that of Type 1, but in this type we read to find how other people live, to find what makes a radio possible, to find what Columbus had to do before he sailed, and



READING: THE TOOL OF SUCCESS

so on. Much school and out-of-school reading is of this kind. New words are frequently found in such reading, and books and magazine articles of this type are generally very "solid-looking." Maps and graphs belong to this kind of reading, and they often tell us briefly just what we wish to know. Sometimes reading for knowledge is slow—when we wish to get details; at other times it is fast—when we are seeking only the main ideas. But such reading is almost always serious because it requires that we think about meanings and relationships. When we see meanings and relationships clearly, we can add to our knowledge easily and rapidly.

Type 4. *We read for pleasure.* Stories, poetry, interesting biographies, fascinating accounts of travel, and many other kinds of material are of this type. Here we read according to our interests, but still we must be good readers to get as much fun from reading as some people do. In this reading we may go at breakneck speed if our hero or heroine is about to be shot or rescued; we may read slowly to picture to ourselves the scenes or to capture fully the flavor of the emotions presented in a poem; or we may even reread a passage intensely to relive the thrill of an airplane trip across the Pacific. The better we read, the more pleasure we can have in reading.

Each of these types requires processes of its own kind—slow or fast, serious or light, exacting or free. Hence the person who has only one way of reading for all purposes is likely to be in trouble most of the time. If he has only the knack of rapid reading—skimming—he is likely to face difficulties when forced to read for knowledge. If he insists on reading slowly and analyzing everything that he reads, he can sample at best only a small fraction of the immense and growing literature of our time.

Reading can be classified loosely into two other forms—silent and oral. Silent reading is generally more rapid than oral. As a matter of fact when oral reading habits, such as lip movements, enter too prominently into silent reading, the speed is greatly reduced. There are teachers who think that oral reading should not be taught at all because of the danger of this interference with silent reading. Consequently there has been and still is in many places a neglect of oral reading and undue emphasis upon silent reading. Oral reading, however, is returning to greater prominence because of its social use and the poor performance of pupils who have had no practice in it. Both forms of reading are useful and, properly taught, they need not interfere with each other.

#### 4. KEYS TO READING

There are keys to reading, as there are to every skill. Many of the keys to reading are found in the early grades. These keys suffice for those grades. In high school and college other keys are needed. What are the keys that will unlock the entrance to advanced reading materials? Three of these keys and their uses are described in this section.

(1) *Physical fitness.* If you see imperfectly, your reading will be seriously impaired, especially if you wait too long a time before having your eye defects corrected. A periodic examination of the eyes is necessary. Among other difficulties in the skill of reading, one is that the two eyes may not work well together. Some authorities have gone so far as to state that if people had only one eye, most reading problems would disappear. Poor adjustments, which arise from the failure of the eyes to focus properly for effective

vision, play a large part in reading troubles, though such disabilities can usually be corrected.

(2) *Concentration*. To read well you must pay close attention to what you are reading. You must concentrate. Excellent concentration is an ability possessed by few people. In examining the problem that poor readers have in improving their reading, we often find that the solution comes simply through their fixing their attention on what they read.

Concentration has value in any pursuit. Imagine the plight of a bank teller who could not concentrate upon the accurate counting of money. Sooner or later, no matter what vocation you may follow, this defect is costly. Although high concentration is a rare power, yet everyone can improve his concentration. One factor which assists in concentration is interest. Interest can be either inherent or acquired. Sometimes reading materials do not arouse our curiosity, and we have difficulty in concentrating on them. Often, however, interest comes if only we start to work and continue. Many times study leads to interest.

Concentration is based on habit. It requires the ability to disregard one's environment, particularly when the surroundings are distracting. If we are easily influenced by distracting factors around us, we have difficulty in building up a habit of concentration.

Concentration may be decreased by too much comfort. No one, of course, wishes to be uncomfortable, but on the other hand, too great luxuriousness may distract our attention. For example if we settle down to what we hope will be a session of concentrated study, but are surrounded on one side by luscious chocolates, on the other by a radio which is playing equally luscious music, and in addition,

are propped up with numerous cushions, these delectable conditions are likely to interfere with our work. We may have to break our line of thought to reach for a chocolate. While we are doing this, something from the radio catches our ear and distracts us in that direction. These distractions are not the material from which concentration is made.

Following are a few suggestions for concentration as well as for reading:

1. Know exactly what you are going to do and how you intend to do it.
2. Begin promptly.
3. Arrange as favorable an environment as possible.
4. If the environment contains distractions, practice disregarding them.
5. Try to finish tasks in a definite time.
6. Maintain active attention.
7. Keep your attention undivided. Julius Caesar may have been able to dictate to three secretaries at once, but he never tried to read a difficult book while the radio poured out an exciting mystery play.
8. Confine your periods of concentration within limits you know you can keep.
9. Frequent periods of concentration are often better than long periods. (But remember that keen interest can enable you to lengthen your periods.)
10. Practice reorganizing your readings and putting them into your own words.

(3) *Vocabulary*. Anyone who has had to interrupt his reading frequently to consult a dictionary knows how costly in time and energy a poor vocabulary can be. Our vocabulary increases rapidly while we are young, because at that time all words are new to us and certain words must be learned to enable us to make our wants known.

Perhaps you can recall your own systematic training in your elementary school years. As this systematic vocabulary training is often neglected in high schools, many people are halted, except for a few new words, in the growth of their vocabularies at about the end of the eighth grade.

Everyone should have a personal plan for vocabulary expansion. This expansion can be achieved by looking up new words when they are met, a task which many students completely avoid. If you wish to be still more systematic, you can check yourself against such a list as Thorndike's list of the twenty thousand most commonly used words.<sup>1</sup> In any case we cannot expect comprehension in reading to be high if many of the words encountered are new. In fact having to look up only a word or two on a page will probably cut your present reading speed in half.

## 5. COMMON DEFECTS IN READING

It is our intention in this discussion to treat silent reading only. We do not wish to undervalue oral reading, but in regard to self-improvement, an increase of speed in silent reading is much easier than in oral reading.

(1) *Poor vocabulary.* This has just been discussed, and suggestions have already been given for increasing the vocabulary. The only additional point here is that vocabulary improvement can proceed along with the improvement of reading.

(2) *Mental hazards.* A mental hazard may be defined as a confused mental and emotional condition which lowers

<sup>1</sup> Thorndike, Edward L., *A Teacher's Word Book of the Twenty Thousand Words Found Most Frequently and Widely in General Reading for Children and Young People* (Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, 1932).

efficiency. We are more likely to connect mental hazards with a golf game than with the subject of reading. A man may be going around the golf course and driving the ball an average of a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards on every hole until he comes to a water hazard which is only twenty-five or thirty feet across, and then he may drive two or three balls into the water. Just why people should do this sort of thing no one seems to understand, but the fact that they do it is well known. The same thing occurs in reading. For example a college student of high intelligence and excellent scholastic record was found to read at the eighth-grade level. His vocabulary was excellent. Everything in his school program and personal habits led one to expect him to do well at reading instead of extremely poorly. Diagnosis of his case showed that he took his earliest reading instruction from a teacher whom he thoroughly detested. This teacher made life miserable for him by ridicule. The tremendous hatred connected with this treatment was transferred to the reading itself. The emotional complex persisted for years. When the connection between this early circumstance and his poor reading was pointed out and the situation explained to him, his reading rate improved one hundred per cent in one week. The main thing in dealing with a mental hazard is to recognize its origin.

(3) *Short eye span.* When one reads, the eyes must both focus and travel back and forth across the line. Records of eye movements made by elaborate photographic machines show that there is a tremendous difference in the number of times various people stop in the course of a line. Since stopping requires time, the greater the number of pauses the greater the time consumed. A person who is trying to increase his rate of reading should extend both



the span and the speed of comprehension. A method of doing this will be suggested in a later section.

(4) *Pointing at words.* Any unnecessary muscular activity connected with reading is certain to slow down the process. An activity such as pointing at each word is a tedious one. And yet many people who wonder what is wrong with their reading do this. It is bad enough to have the eyes stop too often during the line in the process of focusing. It is still worse to point at the words one by one. If one has followed this procedure during the early stages of reading, breaking the habit may require considerable effort. It should be done, however, at all costs.

(5) *Pronouncing the words to oneself.* This is almost as bad as pointing to the words one by one. Movement of the throat muscles in silent reading should be reduced to an absolute minimum. This reduction comes from conscious attention and practice. If it has never occurred to you that this activity may decrease speed in reading, it is likely that no effort has been made to counteract the habit. There is no convincing evidence that pronouncing the words to oneself increases comprehension sufficiently to be worth the additional time it takes.

(6) *Material too difficult.* As a rule people should not be required to read material that is too advanced to allow them to read it rapidly. Not only does difficulty of the material slacken the rate of reading, but it also fosters bad reading habits that carry over into other reading. Difficult reading material results in frequent and long pauses, as well as constant glancing-back, which interfere with rapid reading habits. Of course a person would never be able to read difficult material if he always read easy material, but increases in difficulty should be gradual.

(7) *Purposes poorly in mind.* When a person reads he should

read with a definite purpose. He may be reading simply for pleasure. He may be reading to pass time. He may be reading to master the material. He may be reading much material simply in looking for one item of information. But many people read a novel as slowly as they would read a problem in mathematics. It is no wonder that people who read in this way do not enjoy reading. In reading for study, your purpose should be kept clearly in mind. Yet many students who have been assigned a chapter with questions at the end read the whole chapter and then try to answer the questions. Try reading the questions first sometime and the chapter afterward, and see what happens. When the purpose of reading a chapter is to answer questions, it is a sound idea to have them in mind before starting.

(8) *Lack of the knowledge of sentence structure.* A knowledge or lack of knowledge of grammar affects the reading rate. Grammar explains how sentences are put together or constructed. Especially when one is reading for a main idea, it is helpful to know where the main ideas are likely to be found; these are almost always in the subject and the main verb. An experienced reader can tell at a glance, by the punctuation and by the kind of words with which the sentence begins, where to find the key to the thought of the sentence. The rapid reader, who is reading for ideas only, seems to overlook many words as he skims through a book. Merely a glance at the general appearance of lines of printed material, when they are properly punctuated, is sufficient to give him a fairly accurate knowledge of where he is likely to find what he is seeking. If your instruction in grammar is deficient or wholly lacking, it is a study which is well worth your time in connection with the improvement of reading.

This list of defects in reading might be extended still further. You may be interested in the following list of difficulties in reading which was made from the reports of a group of college students who were interested in improving their own reading. It presents some of the practical problems still faced by students supposed to know how to read:

1. Inability to concentrate
2. Poor vocabulary
3. No individual attention given pupil during early elementary grades
4. Too much oral reading in lower grades—leads to whispering or unnecessary muscular tensions in the mouth and throat
5. Too frequent changes in schools during early years
6. Worry about physical defects—interferes with many mental activities
7. Habit of “skimming” in all reading—prevents slow reading when needed in mastering difficult material
8. Eye difficulties—short eye span; jerky movements; eyes “go all over the page”
9. Mental hazards caused by teachers’ forcing child to read before class; sharp criticisms
10. Skipping grades in elementary school, and thus not getting enough training in reading
11. Mental hazards caused by feeling of inferiority in child when other students read more rapidly (skipping over words hurriedly to keep up with others)
12. Inability to think of meanings of words apart from the way they should be pronounced
13. Inability to concentrate on material upon which the individual is to be tested, because of not being able to remember what is read
14. Tendency to fatigue after reading a few pages

15. Difficulty with long sentences
16. Belief that material would "seep in" if read slowly
17. Reading of *words* rather than phrases or sentences as units
18. Overanalysis

## 6. A PROGRAM FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT IN READING

There is no royal road to reading ability, but anyone who is genuinely interested in improving his reading can do so by finding out the techniques required. It has been pointed out that most reading does not require high intelligence, but depends rather on correct habits. There are given below certain specific suggestions which have been helpful to others in the improvement of their reading. These suggestions should be carefully studied. The only truly general suggestion is that improvement will not come by magic. It usually requires much patience and effort.

(1) *Check the mechanical conditions of reading, especially the eyes.* Obviously what cannot be seen cannot be read, and if one has even slight eye trouble, it is likely to affect his reading. Many people imagine that they have good eyes when such is not the case at all. Many a boy has thought his eyes were excellent until he tried rifle shooting and continued inaccuracy made some defect evident. Many people object to wearing glasses, but such objections should be waived when one considers the dire results which follow any abuse of the eyes—particularly the possibility of impaired sight at an older age.

(2) *Check your reading speed on ordinary material by pages.* This can be done in various ways. One way is to take a book of ordinary difficulty and read it for an hour at your usual rate. The number of pages read may then be counted.

If you desire a more exact measure of the number of words, compute the number of words read per minute. This can be done by reading for ten minutes and counting the words, or by making the calculations from the hour's reading. The rate for a long period is likely to be slightly different because of the effect of fatigue and distraction. The figures for speed in reading have already been given under another section. You can compare your rate with these.

(3) *Check your vocabulary.* The extremely close relationship between vocabulary and reading ability has already been mentioned. Vocabulary may be checked in either of two ways.

First, secure a list such as Thorndike's list of the twenty thousand most commonly used words and attempt to define every tenth word. This method is not very scientific, but it will give you a rough estimate of your knowledge of words in common use. In defining words, if you have plenty of time and don't mind the work, you can write the definition of each one you think you know and then compare the definitions with those of a dictionary. Then your vocabulary score of most frequently used words will be 2000 minus both the number of words not tried at all and the number of words tried but wrong. If you don't care to take the time to do this, just go through and check the words that you recognize. Then your vocabulary score of most frequently used words will be the number of checks. You realize, of course, that the number of words which we can recognize and guess at in reading is much larger than the number of words which we can define exactly.

Second, if you desire to construct your own dictionary vocabulary test, proceed as follows:

a. Have someone make up for you a numbered list of words consisting of the first word in the left-hand column of every tenth odd page beginning with page 1 (1, 11, 21, 31, and so on) in a standard dictionary.

Every tenth page is used because otherwise the list would be too long. Always take the word from the same place: This insures random sampling. It is important that someone else make the list for you lest you get the definitions as you make it.

You can make different lists by taking the first word in the left-hand column of every tenth page beginning with page 2 (2, 12, 22) or page 3 (3, 13, 23), and so on. Omit no word, however rare or unusual, if it is in the main section of words on the page and is the first word in the upper left-hand column. (Disregard carry-over parts of definitions from the preceding page. Take the first new word in the left-hand column. *This is very important.*)

b. Either write the definitions of the words in the list or have someone hold the dictionary for you while you recite your definitions orally.

c. Divide the number of words right by the number of words in the list, and then multiply by one hundred. (Suppose your list has 125 words and you get 45 correct. Then your percentage of correctness is

$$\frac{45}{125} = \frac{9}{25} \times 100 = 36.)$$

d. If the number of words in the dictionary is not stated in the preface, you can compute it by counting the number of words on several pages and finding the average for each page by dividing by the number of pages you have counted. Multiply the total number of pages by the average number of words per page.

e. Multiply the total number of words in the dictionary by the per cent which you found in step c (36% or whatever yours is). This is your vocabulary score. It will be a little larger or a little smaller, according to how lenient you are with yourself in allowing credit for definitions.

Your vocabulary should contain 12,000 or more accurately defined words. Vocabulary figures for the various age levels are as follows: A person who has the average mental ability of a fourteen-year-old has a vocabulary of 9000 words. The average adult vocabulary has been estimated as 11,700 words that can be defined, and the superior adult vocabulary as about 13,500 words. Of course reading vocabularies far exceed these amounts.

(4) *Take a standardized reading test.* If you are interested in a close check of your reading speed and comprehension, give yourself a standardized reading test.<sup>1</sup> These reading tests are better in some ways than the other procedures which have been suggested for checking your ability, because they allow you to make fairly accurate comparisons between yourself and other students at your level.

(5) *Analyze the purpose of your reading and keep this purpose in mind throughout the reading.* It has already been mentioned that there are several motives which may underlie your doing any given piece of reading. If you are told to read a chapter and to answer the questions at the end of the chapter, then your purpose is the answering of those questions. You should read the questions carefully, and then

<sup>1</sup> Any of the following tests can be used: Whipple's *High School and College Reading Test* (Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1925; Forms A or B—four cents each); *Monroe Standardized Silent Reading Test III* (Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, price one and one-fourth cents each); *Traxler Silent Reading Test* for Grades 7 to 12 (Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois; Forms 1 and 2—eleven cents each or \$1.50 per package).

read the chapter. But how many students do so? Simple enjoyment with no attempt to remember what is read is just as much a purpose of reading as is serious study.

(6) *Practice rereading selections for speed.* After reading a difficult passage, reread it to gain speed. In your rereading the difficulties are greatly reduced. This is an excellent practice in review reading for study. One of the errors that students often make is their failure to reread material. Not only is the rereading easier and more rapid, but the fixation is much better.

(7) *Practice reading simple material.* This recommendation is based on the same principle as that just given. Although the skilled reader must do many things at once, such as using a long eye span, staying on the line that is being read, and understanding what is being read, still it is valuable, whenever possible, to practice upon these things one at a time. Therefore when working up speed, one should not be too concerned about comprehension. Reading simple material can be merely speed practice. By simple material we mean exactly that. For example if you are taking an advanced course in some subject, get an elementary text in the same subject, usually one which you have already covered thoroughly. Reread this with the idea of speed foremost in your mind. You will be surprised at some of the things which you have forgotten, and at the same time, pleased with the review which you get in this fashion. Even fairy stories and children's readings are sometimes not too simple for one who is slow in reading and is trying to develop speed by this method.

(8) *Eliminate all the unnecessary accompaniments of reading.* It has been pointed out that oral reading is a comparatively slow and ineffective process as far as speed is concerned. When reading is partially silent and partially oral,



it is bound to be much slower than silent reading. A good way to eliminate the oral accompaniment of reading is to practice reading with the mouth closed.

(9) *Eliminate pointing at words while reading.* Pointing involves many more muscles than are needed in silent reading, and the result is a reduced rate of speed. Sometimes it is a good procedure to hold an object in each hand while you read. Although this may seem to be a silly performance, it is a sure cure for pointing at the words.

(10) *Concentrate on your work.* Avoid distractions. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of concentration in effective reading. Ways of effective concentration have already been discussed and they should be applied.

(11) *Keep a progress notebook both in reading and in vocabulary improvement.* Satisfaction in a good job well done often comes from knowledge of improvement. Unless you keep a record of your reading, your knowledge of your improvement will be vague and general. Your speed and vocabulary rates should be recorded (along with the date) in a notebook, and kept for later comparison. It is well to test yourself once every month and thus have a long-time record of improvement. Especially in vocabulary extension is such a notebook of value. You should keep a separate notebook in which to write the vocabulary itself.

(12) *Practice getting the thought in a limited time.* People are taught to increase their speed in reading by flash cards. These cards sometimes contain single words, sometimes sentences, and sometimes paragraphs. When exposed rapidly, they stimulate speed. Another way to stimulate speed is to have someone time you. Try first to read a page in a minute. Get all the information from the page that you can in that time. Have someone ask you questions on what you have read. See how much of the material you

can remember the next day. This exercise will spur your mental attitude toward rapid reading.

(13) *Find the meanings of unknown words.* College students whose vocabularies are small say that they have the habit of skipping words which they do not understand and then guessing at what is meant. Sometimes this procedure works, but often it leads to an extremely hazy or totally wrong notion of the meaning. Find the meanings of unknown words, and over a period of years, this method will result in greatly increasing your vocabulary.

(14) *Review your grammar carefully.* Grammar is the skeleton of language. Without grammar, which is the orderly arrangement of words to convey a thought, words become a mere jumble and are entirely meaningless. If you understand the structure of the English language, you have one of the best keys to comprehending what you read.

(15) *Stop when tired.* Experimental studies of fatigue indicate that it is wasteful to study or read when one is tired.

(16) *Connect pleasant situations with reading.* Avoid mental hazards in your reading. Many students who come to us for remedial reading have so connected a painful situation with reading, that every time they start to read, they feel an unpleasant association. Search your mind for such unpleasant associations and if you find any, try to reason yourself out of them. If you had a very ill-tempered and overbearing reading teacher when you were in grade school, it is not the fault of the reading, and you should not associate your reaction toward the teacher with reading in general. Instead try to connect pleasant situations with reading.

(17) *Compete with others in reading.* Competition is often a spur to improvement. It is worth trying in reading.

(18) *Analyze the author's style in reading.* Various authors,

even the writers of textbooks, have styles of their own, which they use more or less consistently. If you learn the chief qualities of an author's style and get the feel of it, so to speak, you can improve your own reading of his works. Certain authors, for example, place the key to each paragraph in the first sentence. When you find that a writer does this, you have one of the keys to quick comprehension of his books.

(19) *Analyze the author's theme.* Many authors have definite themes which they attempt to prove. As soon as you understand the theme, you can proceed rapidly and intelligently. Sometimes a book consists of a main theme running through a series of chapters. If you can find the main theme, you can see the relation of the other ideas to it. This main theme and the main trends of thought are often sufficient for your need.

(20) *Restate material in your own words to fix it in mind.*

### *Pupil Activities*

1. Do you like to read? Do you like to read more or less now than when you were younger?
2. To what extent is reading ability the result of special talent?
3. What are the types of reading? With which type do you have the most difficulty?
4. Name the important keys to reading. Explain each.
5. Which of the common defects in reading do you have? What do you intend to do about them?
6. Discuss your reading speed with some of your fellow students and find how you compare with them.
7. Have you tested your vocabulary? How large is it? How does it compare with the vocabularies of other people of your own age and grade?

8. If your vocabulary is poor, what are some of the things that you can do to improve it?
9. Which points in the self-improvement program in reading do you think are the most helpful?

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## CHAPTER X

# Study as Personal Adjustment

### I. WHY STUDY?

SOME think that people study only when they go to school. Such an idea of study is entirely wrong. If a grown man had never gone to school, the chances are that he would need to study more than a man who had. The reason is that schools help people to find answers for many of their problems; they actually help people to avoid study.

Nevertheless we must remember that we cannot simply take answers to our problems ready-made; even the best schools do not supply these. Instead they make us work for the answers. And this work is not punishment—it is necessary because we have to think our problems through for ourselves before we can use the answers fully. We must study.

In Chapter VIII we discussed three reasons or aims for learning. These reasons explain also why we study—to maintain our life, to improve ourselves, and to protect our social welfare. Even animals have to study for the first of these reasons. For example place a hungry animal in a cage with an abundance of food outside. Give the animal bamboo sticks that can be put together to make a pole long enough to reach the food. Most animals will simply run wildly about making frantic efforts to break through the bars and reach the food. They fail to find an effective



THE STUDENT

solution of the problem, even though their lives depend on it. Higher animals make fewer useless movements. Apes look things over, and after a little waste action, take the sticks, put them together, and secure the food. If a starving man is placed in the same cage, he wastes but little time before securing the food, because he studies the situation. The ability to study environment, including people, is an outstanding trait of man.

We live in a society in which study is even more necessary than it once was. Man, fortunately or unfortunately, is not born with the knowledge which his ancestors gained through hard experience. Every new generation starts from the very beginning. The baby today has no more knowledge of the world, its problems and ways of adjustment, than the baby of thousands of years ago. But our world of today is much more complicated and calls for much more study. A boy in the early days of this country usually inherited his father's occupation; and that occupation was his main subject for study. He served an apprenticeship, after which he took over the business. The young boy of today, on the other hand, must select carefully and then master more complex and specialized tasks or fit himself for difficult professions.

Ineffective study is as common as ineffective reading. One of the reasons for this, a reason often given by students themselves, is that many people are not taught to study. Certain subjects, such as geometry, are supposed to give training in study, but many pupils merely memorize ready-made answers in these courses, and fail to learn how to study effectively. Adequate attention to methods of study would probably reduce school failures by at least fifty per cent.



## 2. TYPES OF STUDY

Each of the two types of study to be discussed here gets its characteristics from how we expect to use the results of our study.

(1) *Study for personal guidance.* Sometimes our results are needed only to help us personally decide what to do in a certain matter. Suppose that we plan a westward tour across the country for pleasure. We obtain maps and study different highways. We may wish to visit Yellowstone Park. We look at the long stretch of mountain highway across the Big Horns in Wyoming—a hundred-mile stretch without a garage. We consider the possibility of enjoying beautiful scenery and we also consider the condition of our car. Next we may look for a more direct route. After some time we decide which highway to follow.

Such study is for our own personal guidance. In this study we do not try to verify or record all the steps that lead to our decision. We need only to know that our decision is reasonably correct. Study for personal guidance includes thousands of everyday events.

It may include private investigations to satisfy our personal curiosity. A certain professor studies in this way. Of him it is said, "Professor X is truly a remarkable man. He knows many things that he has learned from his experiments. He has greater information than most of the men who work with him. However he does not try to share his information and has written nothing about it. He conducts an experiment only up to the point where he is satisfied about the results and then stops. He keeps few records of his experiments and takes no pains to tell his associates about his results. Hence although his study is deep, it is

highly personal and of small value to society in general." He studies chiefly to satisfy his own personal curiosity.

(2) *Study for results that are to be expressed to others.* Another type of study is that in which we expect to give expression to whatever we discover. The student who attempts to master a certain subject is an example. So also is the inventor who studies the effect of the combination of various substances in his effort to make artificial rubber. The difference between this type of study and the other kind is that provision must be made in this type for expressing ourselves about the results. This provision requires two things which study for mere personal understanding does not include.

First, study for expression requires the keeping of records. Sometimes these are notes taken on schoolwork. Or they might be the records which a timber cruiser would keep as he goes through a forest estimating the millions of feet of timber therein. Or they might be lengthy reports on a complicated chemical process.

Second, study for expression requires practice in expression. It involves more activity than study undertaken only for personal guidance or curiosity. It presupposes both coherent organization of the material studied and the ability to use language comprehensibly.

All the points to be discussed in the following section apply to both types of study, but it should be remembered that if our study is to help us to express our results, we must keep records and practice expression. Students often say, as an excuse for poor examinations, that they know the material but cannot express it. This is not always a falsehood, but it is an admission that the study has been of the purely personal sort and not for later use.

### 3. SHARPENING YOUR TOOLS FOR STUDY

Six tools for study can be sharpened. The keener these tools are, the more effective study will be.

(1) *Analyze your study.* Many people never understand their own problems. Thorough understanding of a problem or situation is the starting point of all study. Paul DeKruif in his interesting books on the history of medicine often brings out this point. For example it was once believed that malaria was caused by poisonous vapors that rose from swamps at evening. No one dreamed that the lowly and vexing little insect, the mosquito, was the real cause of the disease. That discovery came years later. Meanwhile people tried to stamp out malaria by studying swamp vapors instead of mosquitoes. They were not studying the real problem at all, but something entirely removed from it. Even after the mosquito was discovered to be the cause of malaria, much work and study still had to be done. Disclosing the correct cause was the first step in the correct analysis of this problem, but the solution involved many, many other steps. However without the first step, no progress was possible.

The importance of analysis in study is due to the time-saving value of concentrating upon the central issue of a difficulty. Time has value to all people, and whatever wastes time is to be avoided. All the time spent in studying vapors as the cause of malaria was wasted as far as solving the problem of malaria went. It might, it is true, have resulted in considerable information on vapors, but that information was not needed by the people who were attempting to find a cure for the fever, and probably it was not worth the time spent. The doctor who solved the problem exposed persons to the supposedly harmful vapors

but protected them from all sorts of insects by netting; and it was soon found that, whatever was the cause of malaria, the vapors were not. That doctor analyzed his problem.

The example of malaria shows one vital point in analysis: the avoidance of unnecessary and wrong assumptions. No procedure in any field is more time-wasting or harmful than reliance upon incorrect assumptions. False assumptions have caused personal disagreements and national wars. They have sidetracked people, as in the case of malaria, to the study of problems in an entirely useless way.

The narrowing-down of a problem to its real point is no simple task. A start is achieved when correct guesses are made at the beginning. Sometimes study can begin almost at once upon the major issue. At other times guesses, such as the use of mosquito netting in the study of the cause of malaria, are valuable before the main point of a problem is found. The main step in analysis is that of finding the real issue, and this usually means finding a cause-and-effect relation between situations.

(2) *Learn your methods of study.* In school we have many problems. After the years spent in solving them, we ought to know a good deal about how to study problems in general, especially since problem study is demanded throughout our lives. If, from solving our school problems, we have learned a general method, then this can be transferred to our attempts to solve other problems.

There are two ways to solve problems. They are not entirely different ways, but are closely related to each other. One way is called the *deductive method*. This method is used by scientists and detectives and indeed by everyone. It consists of starting with a general rule or a general idea,

and following the consequences of this rule when applied to a particular case. For example if we have the general principle that an object dropped from a height falls through the air to the ground unless stopped by some other object, and then if we know that a given object has been dropped, we may deduce that it has fallen, even though we may not be able to see it falling. One of the planets which revolves around the sun was discovered by the deductive method. Definite rules about the movement of the planets were already known. Certain planets, however, were not moving according to these known rules. Astronomers asked themselves what caused such a state of affairs. It was then reasoned that if a planet of a certain size were in a certain place, it would produce this result. They pointed their telescopes to the spot where this planet should be, and there it was. It was a triumph of deductive reasoning. The planet was Neptune. The planet Pluto was discovered in a similar fashion.

The *inductive method* is used when we have no rule to cover the case at hand. This method consists of collecting separate but "related" facts, and then trying to get from them a general rule to account for all of them. This method is used by the scientist or anyone else working in a new field or situation. We wish, say, to find the cause of malaria. We expose people to swamp vapors, to mosquito bites, to certain foods, and to many other suspected factors. Finally we collect the following data or facts: Most people bitten by the mosquitoes became ill with malaria, while none of those who were exposed only to the other factors ever did. On the basis of these facts, we induce or make the general rule that malaria is caused by the bite of a certain mosquito. Of course this is a crude description of the process; our experiments would have to

be much more scientific and the conditions much more carefully controlled before we should be justified in drawing a conclusion.

In the actual everyday solution of a problem, a combination of the inductive and deductive methods is used. Here are five steps in the solution of almost any problem:

a. *A problem or difficulty is faced.* The problem may be definite, such as, for example, the presence of a log or tree across the road when we are motoring. Or it may be indefinite and hard to locate. This is likely in social relations, as, for example, when we try to find the reason why a nation declared war.

b. *The conditions of the situation are observed.* In the case of the discovery of the cause of malaria, careful observation of conditions led to finding the mosquito rather than the swamp vapor the center of the problem.

c. *The problem is stated in terms of observed conditions.* Sometimes detectives, like the one in the interesting Philo Vance mysteries, make note of the factors to be solved and list separately the known factors and the unknown factors.

d. *Tentative solutions or guesses are formed and tried.* This is partially a trial-and-error method, which was stated above to be characteristic of lower animals and when used as the only method, to be an ineffective solution. It is, however, often the only possibility. The difference between human beings and animals lies in the ingenuity of man in making shrewd guesses which can be tested by the trial-and-error method.

e. *The most effective tentative solution is assumed to be correct and tried more extensively.* If continued application of this tentative solution seems to work, then it is adopted as the final solution to the problem.

(3) *Organize your study.* Organization is not a method of

problem solving. Neither is organization a method of study. It is an effective tool. The difference between a person who organizes his attack on any problem and the person who does not is like the difference between an army and a mob. A mob may contain as many people as an army, but it is unorganized and consequently ineffective.

Two especially vital points about organization are *regularity* and *balance*. Regularity may show itself in many ways in study. One of these is the fixing of a definite time for studying. In any army (which, if powerful, always illustrates organization at a high point) everything is done in a definite way and at a regular time. Regularity is an essential in study as well as in armies.

Balance is likewise essential in organization. When we come to our discussion of note-taking and the need for correct subheading of topics in note-taking, we shall find a clear illustration of what is meant by balanced organization in study. Without balance, organization cannot be effective in any situation. If in preparing a composition we spend three quarters of our time thinking of a title and only a few minutes in the actual writing of the theme, then we have failed to achieve a balanced organization, to say nothing of a passing grade. Lack of balance in any situation almost unfailingly leads to disorganization. When our diet becomes unbalanced, our body functions become disorganized. When the distribution of wealth is too badly out of balance, as occurred in Russia at one time, social disorganization results.

(4) *Select the correct method of reading.* Two methods of reading are needed in study. First, there is intensive-study reading for purposes of mastering and retaining the content. Second, there is reading for getting a wide back-

ground. Both types should be carried on at the highest speed possible for accuracy and comprehension. Speed is greater in collateral or background reading than in study reading. No effort should be made to do the two types at the same rate.

Study reading, where both mastery and memory are the aims, should stress comprehension; poorly understood reading material is likely to be forgotten. Study reading should also include repetition. What is repeated is better remembered.

Rapid collateral reading is possible on a wide scale only to the competent speed reader. One of the explanations always given for the inadequacy of the training of high school and college students is that, because of a low reading rate, many students can acquire only a narrow survey of their fields of study. The competent student, however, always reads not only a textbook, which is usually to be thoroughly mastered, but also much other material as well. This type of reading is also valuable because it is one of the most pleasurable types of reading. Even when a reader's attitude toward his work is wholesome and when he is interested in what he is doing, still, whatever has to be read with the idea of mastering it and perhaps taking an examination upon it, subjects him to pressure. What is read purely from choice, however, and what he will not be tested upon, is read for enjoyment alone.

In rapid reading for background, speed does not consist solely of going rapidly over all the words. One factor which makes for speed is the knowledge of what to omit. Many stories, illustrations, examples, and so on, can be skipped entirely when one is going rapidly through a book for the purpose of getting main ideas. A frequent error in students' reading, gained perhaps from early training and



the overstudying of texts which have to be carefully memorized, is the notion that every word must be read. The wise selection of what to omit is just as valuable in speed reading as the skill of reading at the highest possible rate.

(5) *Concentrate.* Study is an applied exercise in concentration. He who is unable to concentrate can never regard himself as having truly studied. All the factors mentioned in the discussion of concentration in Chapter IX should be kept in mind in studying.

One special feature of concentration was omitted in the general treatment of that subject. This is the observation of details. Many of the world's greatest discoveries in science and medicine have been made not because of some overwhelming upset of general principles, but because of the ability of someone to notice details. A. Conan Doyle, in his interesting stories of Sherlock Holmes, has brought this out in a way which is true to life. Observation of detail, so productive of results in the work of Holmes, came from his intense concentration upon the problem investigated. The careless observer seldom makes a discovery. Attention to details which, taken together, may lead to a general principle or conclusion, has a place not only in the work of a detective, but in other study as well.

(6) *Take the right kind of notes.* The timber cruiser who goes through the woods to estimate the amount of timber is a note-taker; timber cruisers always make careful notes of their observations, because the facts are too numerous to be remembered and the notes are necessary for making reports. The newspaper reporter also keeps notes, because he, too, must give a detailed picture of what he sees and hears. The ability to take notes well is necessary in many occupations. Everyone should learn to take them.

Two types of note-taking may be mentioned. One can be illustrated by stenographic notes, in which everything is recorded. This is the kind of note-taking court reporters practice. The other type of note-taking consists of taking scattered but systematic records as an aid in remembering or in organizing facts for presentation. Attention will be given here only to the second type, for full notes are seldom taken and seldom used by students. The ability to take summarizing notes, however, has great practical value in schoolwork. The following rules may prove helpful:

a. *Be economical in note-taking.* Take only enough notes to enable you to recall what you need. A frequent error in note-taking is the copying-down of too many notes. Notes, whether taken on books, speakers, or events, draw attention from the situation itself. Unless someone else must use your notes, the fewer notes taken, the better.

b. *Use systematic main headings and subheadings in note-taking.* Notes require organization of ideas according to their importance. Unless one has a system of organization, later effort to remember and use the material will fail. A simple, effective method for ordinary notes is to use Roman numerals for main headings, Arabic numerals for subheadings, and the letters of the alphabet for subheadings under the Arabic numerals. Many students find difficulty in reviewing notes for examinations because material is carelessly noted down as though each point were of equal importance with every other point. Material which has been summarized by careful organization of ideas makes review comparatively easy, for such review can be carried out according to the importance of ideas. For example if one lacked time and wished to review for a test in a school subject, only main headings could be

reviewed. This would be simple with well-organized notes.

c. *Use a system of personal shorthand and abbreviations.* It is not necessary to know shorthand in order to take notes. As a matter of fact, unless one wishes to make an exact copy of content, shorthand is not even an aid. One should, however, use a method of personal abbreviations to save time and to avoid too much writing. Forms of the verb "to be" should seldom be used. Words such as "psychological" need not be spelled in full repeatedly. Expressions such as "is greater than" or "is less than" should be shown by mathematical symbols. Articles and unimportant adjectives can be omitted. Whole sentences need not be used.

d. *Select a notebook that fits your needs.* When notes are of the sort to which additions must be made from time to time, they are better kept in a notebook in which such additions can be entered. Loose-leaf notebooks have their disadvantages, but they are valuable for the sort of notes which have to be added to or subtracted from.

e. *Emphasize connecting items in your notes.* Almost everyone has had the experience of taking notes at one time, and on going back to them, being unable to trace the thread of thought throughout. This sad experience results usually from omission of connecting units. Notes should always include connecting links.

#### 4. STUDYING FOR EXAMINATIONS

As long as we live, we shall have to take examinations. Since this is so, we may as well learn early how to prepare for them and how to take them as successfully as possible. After all, examinations are not always hard or embarrass-

ing if we harness ourselves for them. Students who have been successful in examinations plan for them, just as successful people do for all their work.

(1) *How to prepare for examinations.* An old saying tells us, "Forewarned is forearmed." Our teachers warn us about examinations; here are some of the ways to arm ourselves.

a. *Understand your material.* Regardless of the kind of examination you face, whether it is a civil service examination, an examination in a school subject, or a conference with a prospective employer who is examining you for a position, you are most likely to succeed if you "know your subject." Students often worry unnecessarily about examinations. They often spend more time fretting and devising schemes to save time than they would need to master their material. The type of examination, although different types require different kinds of study, is far less important for your score than your mastery of the material; *understand your material.*

Find a short cut for memorizing, if you can. Students sometimes save time by taking the first letters of important words and coining a "word" from them. Suppose that you were asked to memorize the six ways just given for "sharpening your tools for study." You could use the "word" AMOSCK, meaning analyze, methods, organize, select, concentrate, kind. This may not be a good way and it may take more time than learning the points as they were given. If such a plan works for you, use it; otherwise, try another one.

b. *Know the type of examination.* Knowledge of the subject, while of great importance, is not the only factor in getting ready for examinations. The type of examination makes a difference. The way to prepare and take notes for an essay examination is different from the way to

memorize facts and statements for true-false examinations.

For an essay examination, you need well-organized notes and practice in writing or at least in thinking about important topics that are likely to be asked about in the examination. For a true-false examination, you need to drill yourself on details. Essay tests are likely to stress organization and expression; objective tests are likely to stress rapid recognition of statements and choice of facts.

Successful people know that one person's method of examination is frequently different from the method of another. This is as true out of school as in school. In school, teachers study carefully what they teach in order to find the important points in their subjects. They try to have their pupils remember these important points. They emphasize these points. And they are likely to examine their pupils on them. This is no secret, for teachers wish their pupils to be ready for examinations on these points. One good way to prepare for an examination in school is to remember what the teacher has emphasized.

Out of school, successful people discover, if possible, what their employers emphasize. They prepare themselves on such points just as they would in school. They find out also, if possible, how their employers examine—whether by short, direct questions or by long, indirect questions. The more we know about the kind of examination that we are likely to face, the more successful we are likely to be in taking it.

c. *Distribute your reviews.* In spite of all student superstition to the contrary, cramming is not an effective study procedure. Although it is possible to memorize much subject matter in a short time by cramming, the content and meaning are not well mastered. The best preparation for examinations comes from frequent reviews of what has

been covered. Try this method now, and you will save yourself trouble in the future.

(2) *How to take examinations.* The hints we have just given about preparing for examinations apply equally to taking them. In fact we might say that an examination well prepared for is half taken. Here are further devices which may assist you in the crucial moment:

a. *Cultivate a favorable attitude.* Attitude toward an examination affects a person's success; indeed it is sometimes as important as the amount a person knows. "Fighting an examination" is one of the worst things you can do. Fear of examinations is just as bad. Fear and anger are ineffective emotions for examinations and prevent students from doing justice to themselves. If a test is fair, and most tests are, and if you have done your work well, you will probably be successful. Cultivate the habit of success; one success often leads to further success. "Nothing succeeds like success."

b. *Read essay examinations in their entirety before writing.* Many students, even at the college level, have the habit of starting immediately with the first question, and not pausing until they have written completely out of proportion to the amount of time allowed for the whole examination. Answers to examination questions should be budgeted in terms of time and of the importance of each question.

c. *Read examinations carefully.* Almost everyone loses credit on an examination sooner or later through no fault of his own or the examiner's, simply by writing a correct answer to a question that was never asked. Find out what the examiner asks; read the questions carefully.

d. *Make your answers to questions as clear as possible.* The person who grades your paper is not a mind reader. His

task will be to grade just what you have written and nothing more. Say what you mean as clearly and fully as you can.

e. *Give your first answer to true-false tests.* When taking an objective examination such as a true-false test, do not over-analyze the statements. This is a common error. Even well-constructed true-false examinations, when over-analyzed, seem open to being answered either way. If one knows the facts involved in the material, the best answer is usually the first one. The questions or statements are seldom "trick" statements.

## 5. WATCH YOUR WORDS

At first glance language seems to be simple and straightforward. We may see a creature, for example, with four legs and fur. We agree to call it "cat." Afterward when we say "cat," people understand what we mean, because of our previous agreement.

To a person who has not thought deeply about words, all language may seem to be only an expansion of this simple and straightforward plan. But that is by no means true. Many words have many meanings each. The simple-looking word *get* has over twenty meanings. A man may say, for example, "I stopped to get George." This could mean that the man stopped as an enemy to give George a beating, or it could mean that the man stopped as a friend to take George somewhere. Other meanings of *get* can be shown in the same situation: The man could "get" out of his car, "get" to George's house, "get" into the house, and so on. We should soon "get" into many difficulties if we did not watch the meanings of this word.

Men have studied and observed words for centuries to

find the exactly right ones for their purposes and to make them mean what they say. Here are some suggestions that will help you use language more effectively in your own study.

(1) *Use definite, specific words.* Indefinite, general words often lead to mental confusion. For example suppose that my teacher has given me a low grade and kept me after school. I may have a strong feeling against her. Suppose I say to myself, "I hate my teacher." Regardless of the justice of my feelings, such a statement is both inaccurate and dangerous.

The trouble comes from the use of a general word when a definite word should have been used. I do not hate my "teacher." I hate only Miss Jones or Miss Smith or whoever my teacher is. But you may say, "What of it? Everyone knows what you mean. As long as this idea is conveyed, what's the difference whether you say 'I hate my teacher' or 'I hate Miss Jones'?" The difference is that "teacher" is a general word, and my saying, "I hate my teacher," leads me to transfer my feeling of hatred to a general group of people; that is, to all teachers. But many teachers have done nothing to arouse my hatred. The error of the statement itself seems simple enough and quite harmless, but the mental consequences will be harmful to me, for I shall have a strong tendency to dislike all teachers in the future. Later, in Chapter XVII, you will see how these loose methods of expression may lead to a distorted picture of the world.

Here is another example. Johnny steals a bicycle. Stealing bicycles is "bad." Therefore Johnny is a "bad" boy and a "thief." But when we have forgotten about the stolen bicycle and the history of why we called Johnny a bad boy at first, he will still be known as "bad," and those



who hear him called "bad" will exert their imaginations on what is meant. Besides, a "thief" steals and steals, but Johnny stole only once. It is more accurate to say, "Johnny stole a bicycle"—nothing more. This does not excuse the stealing or prevent the punishment. It holds Johnny responsible now, however, for just what he has done, but does not tag him as "bad" or as a "thief" after he has reformed—if he has reformed. We should always watch our language and use words that are definite and that are descriptive of the actual state of affairs.

(2) *Remember that words are not things.* Words are like maps. Used correctly, they are excellent pictures of the world, and usually such word pictures help you to understand your world correctly. Used incorrectly, words are as misleading as any map that could be made.

Let us see how misleading a map might be. Suppose that you wish to drive from Seattle to New York and that you have no map. Suppose, further, that I draw a map for you, placing Butte, Montana, where Chicago should be, placing Chicago where New Orleans is, and placing New York where Cleveland is. What a picture of the highway this would be! How successful would you be if you used my map as a guide for your trip?

Let us turn to word pictures of the world, pretending first that words are things. My picture of the teacher who gave me a low grade contains the word *hatred*. I repeat this term until finally the word *hatred* and the word *teacher* are always side by side in my word picture of study. My picture of Johnny contains the words *bad* and *thief*. Later Johnny himself changes, but I still keep the old word picture. Both pictures are wrong—there are many good teachers and there is a new Johnny.

Wrong word pictures are probably most dangerous for

us when we study people, for people are ever likely to change. If we trace our words back to the actual situations for which the words originally stood, we can rid ourselves of many of our wrong word pictures; if we remember that the reason why we have always thought of teachers as hateful was simply that Miss Jones once gave us a low grade in elementary algebra, we can probably break down this distorted opinion. Sometimes we may find that things or persons have changed so that the old words mean nothing. In such cases we can make a new picture, which will need still further watching to keep it true to changing conditions.

Keep words in their proper places. They are neither things nor persons. They are helpers in study only when they can be traced back to their meanings.

(3) *Remember that things are not exactly alike and that words cannot make them so.* Two things or two persons may be alike as two peas, but never exactly alike. Two persons cannot exist under exactly the same conditions; their time and place are certain to be different, and their experiences are therefore different.

But sometimes our lazy use of words leads us to overlook this fact and to make sweeping statements or generalizations, as they are called, that seem to imply that certain things are exactly alike. Such a generalization is "History repeats itself." This statement is of course wrong, unless we mean that similar conditions lead to similar consequences. History never exactly repeats itself—no two events are exactly the same. We have merely been led by the "catchiness" of a certain phrase, to permit words to mislead us into saying that something is true which a little thought would convince us is false. In studying we should look for differences between things, between persons, and

between events, especially if on the surface they seem to be alike.

You may ask, then, about human nature. Isn't it possible for a judge of human nature to forecast human conduct? Yes, he may forecast with "reasonable accuracy." But his forecast is only a probability, like the forecast of the weather bureau or that of the sports expert. Forecasts are never absolutely certain. Even if a man sits on a stick of dynamite, he may live—if the dynamite fails to explode. The realization that objects are never identical does not prevent us, however, from forecasting probabilities. Statements of nonidentity simply guard us against the perils of assuming the exact similarity of any two objects.

(4) *Remember that words cannot keep things from changing.* The absolute science of today is often the folly of tomorrow, and in terms of language this means that no final statement is possible. Both our actual knowledge of the realities of the universe and our language about this knowledge change continually, even though the realities themselves may be unchanging. Whenever our point of view becomes crystallized in unchanging language, or whenever we use the language as a final statement, then progress in the knowledge itself is seriously crippled. Science has always had to fight against this.

Our conclusions about the relation of language to study are simple. We should make our language correspond to reality as nearly as possible. We should never assume that any individual or group has all the characteristics of any other individual or group. We should guard especially against becoming the slaves of the language instead of using it as our tool, and we should be perfectly willing to have any statement modified if facts warrant a change. Our descriptions of individuals and events should be in words

which compel the listeners to do as little guessing as possible about our meaning. If we do all these things consistently, we shall improve with practice and become more proficient in the use of words.

You can apply this point to your study of yourself. You are constantly changing, sometimes slowly and sometimes rapidly. Therefore as you study yourself from year to year or even from day to day, use words that fit the changes. Words that once fitted you may now or next week be misfits.

Change the words with which you describe yourself as you change the words with which you describe others. What you say about yourself and others makes a great difference in your own social life. Choose words that fit changing conditions. Use the self-study questions of the next chapter as helps in directing your attention toward definite, desirable changes. If you change in these desirable ways, you will be able to use better and better words, such as are given in Section 5 of Chapter XVI, to describe yourself.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. Talk to a successful businessman and ask him if he thinks that studying one's job is an important thing to do. You might find out also if he thinks there is any particular knack involved in knowing how to study.
2. What, in your opinion, are some of the errors made by people most frequently in attempting to study correctly? How can they be corrected?
3. Summarize the discussion in the text of analysis in study. It is a very important point.
4. Have you ever solved a difficulty by deductive thinking? What was it? Did you come to a correct solution? List the

steps that you took in coming to this solution, and compare them with the steps in problem solving as given in this chapter.

5. Brevity in note-taking is an advantage, but do not be so brief or so general that, when you go back to your notes, you can't remember what the discussion that they stand for dealt with. Follow the suggestions for note-taking in preparing a one-page summary of this chapter.

6. Examinations should be a pleasure! They give you an opportunity to show what you know or how well you have mastered something. As much credit is lost by being afraid of examinations as by lack of knowledge. Try to develop a favorable attitude toward them. Try yourself on one of the tests that you may find in a magazine.

7. Try to express the last section of this chapter in your own words.

8. Was Johnny a "thief"? What difference would it make to Johnny whether you call him a thief or not?

9. Study an ordinary map of your city or state and make a list of things that are omitted. If you can find a word picture of the same locality make a list of its omissions. Which is the more accurate or the more complete, the map or the word picture?

10. It is sometimes said that "All gamblers are thieves," "All politicians are grafters," and "Man is a social animal." In what ways do these statements violate the statements in this chapter?

11. To what extent have the names of political parties kept the parties from changing?

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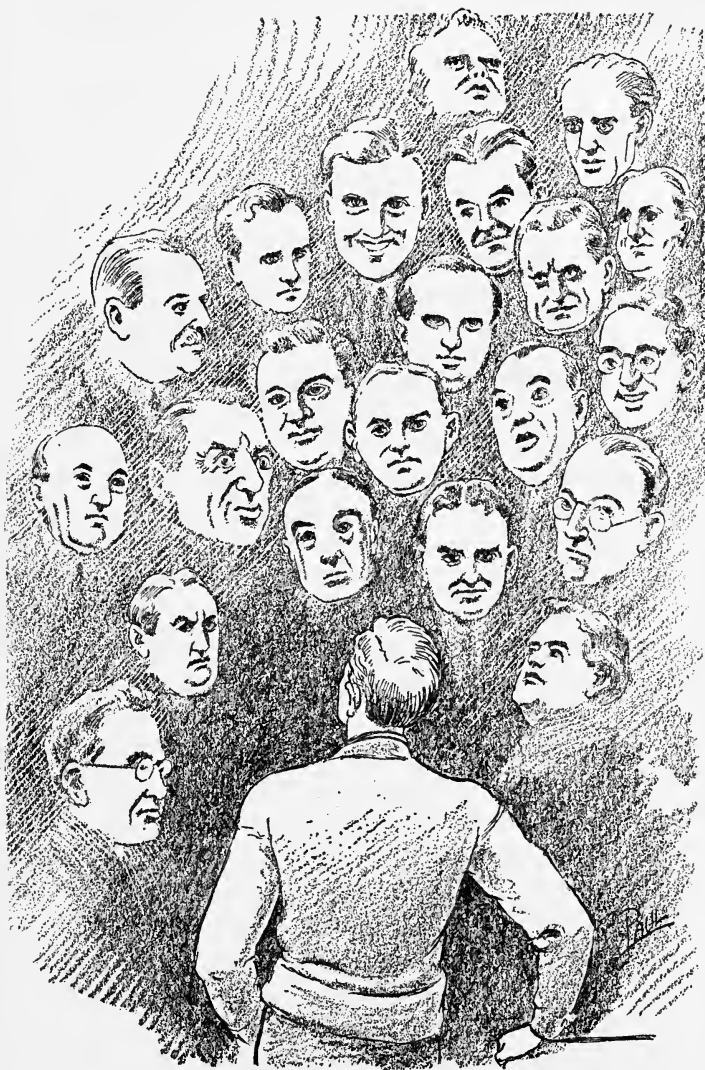
## CHAPTER XI

# Personal Adjustment to People and Situations

### I. EVERYONE'S GAME

STUDYING people and situations is a game in which all of us are players. It is a game of hide and seek. We "hide" from other people, or at least try to hide from them, whatever we think may lower their opinion of ourselves. Often in doing so, we try to conceal things that are of little or no importance. We "seek" whatever we think may give us an advantage over another person, and in this we often seek things that are not worth knowing. But this game is complicated, for we sometimes reverse the rules. Instead of trying to hide ourselves, we seem to show ourselves with frankness. Sometimes this frankness is for "show-off" reasons that are really uncomplimentary to ourselves; at other times our frankness is a bait to induce another person to show something about himself.

There are two main reasons why we study people: (1) our own welfare, which depends on them, and (2) our personal interest. Hence studying people is much like any other kind of study. We study people to adjust ourselves better to society. We analyze people. People are problems to us, and so we follow the five steps of problem solving in the solution of the social problems they present to us. We try to balance our judgments about people. A final point in



"THE PROPER STUDY OF MANKIND IS MAN"



which the study of people is like other study is this: We have to use the greatest possible care with our language because words often play disastrous tricks when we think of people or try to describe them. In this study, then, we need to use the general principles of study as stated in Chapter X.

In our study of people we must not forget that the first persons to be studied are ourselves. Who am I? This question has never been fully answered, partly because we cannot see ourselves as others see us, and partly because we hesitate to concentrate upon ourselves and face the results. Let us, nevertheless, begin the study of people by looking at ourselves. Then we shall study other people. Finally we shall study situations in which we and other people are concerned.

## 2. WHO AM I?

What you should know about yourself depends on who you are. Some people seem to know chiefly what is bad about themselves, while others seem to see only the good in themselves. The well-balanced person probably knows a great deal about both his strength and his weakness. Such a person knows that if he looks at himself too little, he will attempt many things impulsively and unsuccessfully, and that even when he succeeds, his triumph is not worth the effort. He knows also that if he looks at himself too much, he will see too pure a flower for the ordinary world or too delicate a plant for the harsh climate of social life.

When you study yourself, you should follow these rules:

1. *Never let self-study cast you down*—Your faults are merely problems to be solved, and your weaknesses are only “stop signs.”

2. *Never let self-study carry you to the clouds*—The self-inflation that enables people to rise often leads to an explosion in the thin air of self-conceit.

3. *Never forget other people in self-study*—Judgments of yourself must be tempered by your knowledge about other people.

4. *Never go too far in self-study*—Far enough, but not too far, is the rule of balance.

Before a man runs for a political office, he looks himself over. He "takes stock" of himself to find out his strong points and his weak points. If he makes a list of these points, the list is a self-inventory. This inventory helps him to see himself clearly. It shows him his chances for election to the office.

Your own chances in life depend on your knowledge of yourself. The better you know yourself, the better you can plan your life. People need self-inventories. Such inventories show them the points in which they can improve themselves. As soon as you know such points about yourself and work at them, you increase your chances for successful living. As far as possible you should make yourself responsible for your improvement.

A plan for making a self-inventory is given on the following pages. You may add any other points in which you can improve yourself. As you will see, the ideal answer to each inventory question is *Yes*. But as you will see also, few persons can honestly give themselves a strong *Yes* on all these points.

These directions will help you in making your inventory: (1) The questions can be answered *Yes*, *No*, *Sometimes*, or *I don't know*; (2) be as accurate as possible; (3) give yourself as low or as high a rating as you think you deserve—this is only a working list; (4) talk with your friends about your problems, and with your parents and teachers; and (5) be

confident that you can improve yourself in many of these points.

To save yourself the time of much writing, make an inventory form with a separate page for each of the eight divisions of the inventory. Check (✓) your answer in the proper column. Review your answers at least once a month for six months.

### FORM OF PERSONAL INVENTORY FOR SELF-ADJUSTMENT

#### A. Physical Competence

| Question | Yes | No | Sometimes | Do not know | How I can improve                                                                                      |
|----------|-----|----|-----------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1        |     | ✓  |           |             | Spend less time on hockey. Practice tennis more often. Begin playing golf?                             |
| 2        | ✓   |    |           |             |                                                                                                        |
| 3        |     |    |           | ✓           | Speak with Dr. Weiss next week about diet.                                                             |
| 4        | ✓   |    |           |             |                                                                                                        |
| 5        |     | ✓  |           |             | Have new glasses fitted <i>tomorrow</i> .                                                              |
| 6        |     |    |           | ✓           | How long are smallpox vaccinations effective? See Dr. Weiss next week to find out if I need a new one. |

#### D. Ways of Acquiring and Using Skill

|   |   |    |   |  |                                                                                |
|---|---|----|---|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | ✓ |    |   |  | But I can also improve in tennis.                                              |
| 2 | ✓ |    |   |  |                                                                                |
| 3 |   | ✓✓ |   |  | See if I can't get fellows to organize dancing class. Maybe girls would join?  |
| 4 |   | ✓  |   |  | Not necessary. Am not bothered by such tension.                                |
| 5 |   |    | ✓ |  | Must get rid of habit of fidgeting.                                            |
| 6 |   | ✓  |   |  | Keep trying. Give at least 20 minutes a day to typing outside my typing class. |

## PERSONAL INVENTORY FOR SELF-ADJUSTMENT

*A. Physical Competence*

1. Do you now have physical recreations that will interest you when you are an adult?
2. Are you exercising properly for *your* body?
3. Is your diet correct for *your* body?
4. Are your physical functions regular?
5. Are minor difficulties, such as poor vision, corrected?
6. Are you protected from contagious diseases by vaccination and antitoxin?
7. Is your body as healthy as you can make it?
8. Are you cultivating habits that promote and conserve health?
9. Are you informed about quacks?
10. Are you armed against "health rules," such as "Head up, chin in, shoulders back," "An apple a day keeps the doctor away," and so on?

*B. Problem-solving Competence*

1. Do you solve problems rather than dodge them?
2. Do you have a plan for problem solving?
3. If you know of ways to help yourself, do you use them?
4. Do you work well alone?
5. Do you persevere?
6. Did you ever find a problem and set yourself at work upon it?
7. Do you know how and where to get help when you need it?
8. Do you look for real causes instead of taking someone's explanation?
9. After you solve a problem, can you apply your answer to other situations?
10. Are you still open-minded after you solve a problem?

*C. Ways of Acquiring and Using Knowledge*

1. Do you know how to study?
2. Do the words that you use fit the objects for which they stand?
3. Do you know the meanings of words that you read?
4. Have you a study list of the words that trouble you?
5. Do you know a good set of rules for memorizing?
6. Do you know how to lengthen your study periods by your own interest?
7. Do you know four main points about any subject that you have studied in school?
8. Can you apply your out-of-school knowledge in your study of a school subject?
9. Can you apply your school knowledge to out-of-school conditions?
10. Can you apply your knowledge of one subject to the study of another subject?

*D. Ways of Acquiring and Using Skill*

1. Can you plan a variety of outdoor and indoor games, active and quiet?
2. Have you increased your skill in any game, athletic or otherwise, this year?
3. Can you dance?
4. Can you relax unnecessary tension in the back of your neck?
5. Can you stand at ease?
6. Can you typewrite fifty words a minute?
7. Can you read history, fiction, or this book at the rate of thirty pages an hour?
8. Is your reading rate as high as you can make it?
9. Can you find books in a large library?
10. Can you make a short speech?

*E. Social Competence*

1. Can you tell a story effectively?
2. Can you talk earnestly about serious things?
3. Can you talk entertainingly about trifling things?
4. Have you a sense of humor?
5. Can you cure the "blues"?
6. Can you select close friends wisely?
7. Can you make a stranger feel at ease?
8. Can you introduce friends with ease?
9. Can you keep a secret?
10. Can you be courteous and keep your poise when you meet a rebuff?
11. Can you stop malicious gossip?
12. Can you name four good traits of someone for whom you care little?
13. Can you delay your judgment about people?
14. Can you manage your own affairs as well as you could another person's?
15. Are you as prompt and punctual as you wish others to be?
16. Do your manners fit the different occasions in your life?
17. Do your clothes please other people as well as they please you?
18. Do you tell yourself the truth?
19. Can you follow as well as you can lead?
20. Can you be firm or say *No* without giving offense?

*F. Creative Competence*

1. Can you plan a party or a picnic?
2. Can you write an interesting story about an amusing event?
3. Can you write a play or poem?
4. Can you express yourself through art or music?

5. Can you sketch or paint?
6. Can you plan a stage setting for a play?
7. Can you invent a new game or sport?
8. Can you plan a yard, garden, or park?
9. Can you revise and improve what you have created?
10. Can you meet a new situation effectively?

### G. *Aesthetic Competence*<sup>1</sup>

1. Have you a favorite color?
2. Can you select other colors that blend with it?
3. Have you a favorite landscape?
4. If a collection of ten paintings ranged in value from ten dollars to ten thousand dollars, could you select the best five according to their merit?
5. Can you select and arrange a group of records for a well-balanced musical program?
6. Does your imagination "run ahead" of the music that you hear?
7. Do you imagine how folk dancing looks when you listen to folk tunes?
8. Do you listen for the "main" theme in musical compositions?
9. Do you hear the subordinate themes when you listen to music?
10. Are you annoyed when a play is badly produced?
11. Do you have definite standards for judging movies?
12. Can you enter freely into the mood of the music you hear, the pictures you see, and the books you read?
13. Have you a collection of anything beautiful—pictures, shells, rocks, butterflies, musical records, and so on?
14. Does a smoothly running machine seem beautiful to you?
15. Can you develop interest in a form of art that you don't understand very well as yet?

<sup>1</sup> Aesthetic competence is ability to appreciate beauty and art.

### H. *Volitional Competence*<sup>1</sup>

1. When you have a choice of action, do you make the best choice and follow it?
2. Is your will to face facts squarely stronger than your will to dodge them?
3. Do you study with a will to learn instead of with a will merely to "get by"?
4. Do you apply your best knowledge and best skill?
5. Do you keep yourself as fit as you can?

### 3. EXAMPLES OF STUDYING PEOPLE

(1) *An artist and a politician.* A famous artist was once asked to paint a portrait of a rising politician. Having heard tales of the man's rough appearance, crudeness, and vulgarity, he was sure that no handsome, gracious model awaited him. As he expected, he found the politician unwilling to pose. After some time, however, arrangements were made for a two-hour sitting.

The reluctant model made himself ready for the artist by rumpling his hair and with a jaded look and deep sigh, throwing himself carelessly into a chair. The artist, Alban Jasper Conant, gazed upon this untidy subject and although he saw no uncouth barbarian such as he had expected to find, he could not help comparing this man with the fine ladies and gentlemen whom he had already painted. Believing the coarse rumors that he had heard, the artist made a flippant remark to set his model at ease. As though he guessed the purpose behind the remark, a change flashed over the model's face. Then the artist saw the character of the man he was about to paint. The model

<sup>1</sup> Volitional competence is strength of will power.



was one of America's shrewdest students of men—Abraham Lincoln.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Sandburg's book has scores of examples that show how Lincoln studied men. Long before allowing a man to be nominated for an office, he would observe the man and the situation. The candidates that he approved then sought the advice of this keen observer, who enjoyed politics as a game. The big things in the game were clear to him because he began by mastering the little things.

(2) *Friendly enemies*. Would you choose a person as an associate if you knew that he would argue violently with you? Most persons would not. This dislike of arguments is due partly to a desire to live peaceably and partly to a belief that work is done best when workers agree—an uncomplimentary opinion about our plans is disagreeable and may indeed wreck them. Yet three men who had key positions in the United States in 1934, seem to have argued themselves into close co-operation.

After the Presidential election of 1932, two men disagreed so violently about national problems that one of them ended the discussion by walking off in a huff. He had been telling the President-elect how to remodel the government. Instead of having the man imprisoned or at least forbidden to repeat the offense, Mr. Roosevelt invited him for another interview. Later that man was made administrator of the National Recovery Act, for we have been speaking of General Hugh S. Johnson. The third man of this group also disagreed many times with the President and he said so in strong terms. But in spite of this disagreement, or more likely, partly because of it, he was given more and more power in the administration. His name is Harold L. Ickes.

<sup>1</sup> Sandburg, Carl, *Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 518-520.

Another story of arguing oneself into promotions is that of a young engineer who was typing a mining report that he knew was wrong. The further he went with his typing, the more certain he was that he should present his argument to his employer. Still he hesitated, for he knew that employees are expected usually to follow plans rather than to make or change them. He thought seriously about his employer and wondered how he would receive the suggestions. Suddenly he stopped writing and bolted off to his employer. As he feared, the employer was angered, but not for long. The young man had a knack for facts and for presenting them. The employer became convinced of his own error and promoted the young man, whom we know as Herbert Hoover.

(3) *A journalist's lesson.* A London journalist went to a hatter recently to have his hat reblocked. While he waited, the conversation drifted. It turned out that the hatter had studied people for many years by way of hats and heads. He had found that most heads are only ordinary, while some are long and narrow and full of "nobbles." It happened that many of his customers were lawyers, and he was astonished at the size of their heads. "I suppose," he said, "it's the amount of thinking they 'ave to do that makes their 'eads swell." In the seaport where he had formerly worked, he had noticed that sea captains also had large heads: "'Stror'nary the 'eads they 'ave," he said. "I suppose it's the anxiety and worry they get thinking about the tides and the winds and the icebergs and things."

After the journalist left the shop, he thought of many small-headed men who probably did as much "thinking" as lawyers and as much worrying as sea captains. He de-

cided that the hatter was wrong in a majority of cases. But he fell next to thinking of how people study one another and concluded that everyone judges people according to a special way of looking at life. To the dentist, the well-bred person has good teeth; to the tailor, good clothes; to the financier, a good bank account; to the artist, fine pictures at home. Each person judges others according to the color of his own spectacles.

(4) *What these examples show.* These examples of studying people illustrate many points that are observed by shrewd students. The artist, like the hatter, had his own way of studying models. He erred first by accepting secondhand information about Mr. Lincoln and later by basing his judgment upon first impressions. He gauged his conversation to fit his guess about the man's character. This plan is often useful, for it leads the person who is observed to say or do something that reveals himself. The artist's jest missed fire, but its purpose was served gloriously. Probably Lincoln had noticed already the artist's condescending attitude, and the changed expression showed the artist that Lincoln had judged him correctly. Fortunately the artist was willing to change his own mind, and so, from that moment, the two understood each other better. This example shows, therefore: first, *the danger of accepting second-hand information about people*, especially if it is a rumor told by a prejudiced person; second, *the need for revision of first guesses or judgments*; third, *the value of conversation and facial expression* as aids to judgment; and fourth, *the importance of accurate knowledge about people*. The last point is emphasized further by Lincoln's ability to judge many people accurately by observing carefully the essential little things that other people often overlook or misinterpret. It should

be noted that facial expression by itself is often misleading.

The value of conversation in studying people is shown again in the examples of General Johnson, Mr. Ickes, and Mr. Hoover. These men were independent enough to be frank. The purpose of their arguments was not merely to win a point, but to present facts that might change a course of action. When facts are presented ably and adhered to, an argument can show important points about the persons involved. The one who presents the facts reveals four things about himself: (1) his *ability to prepare himself* by studying a situation; (2) his *ability to present* what he knows; (3) his *sincerity* in regard to his facts; and (4) his *courage* in sticking to his facts when he is opposed. A person like Mr. Roosevelt or like Mr. Hoover's employer frequently has "practical ideas" that are based upon inaccurate and incomplete knowledge. His behavior in the presence of new information is likely to show whether he is intolerant and set in his opinions or able to adjust himself to new facts. *Willingness to change, if the facts call for a change, and a preference for conclusions based on facts, rather than opinions, mark the able, progressive man.*

The latter's judgments about people were like many of our own—we often study and judge people according to our own narrow experience and interests. When we do so, we blind ourselves to other ways of studying people. Probably many of our best friends will always be those who fit our narrowest and most intimate views. There is possibly no objection to such friendships, provided that we have other friends who shake us out of ourselves once in a while, and who show us that other people also have equally good ways of studying people. The latter is a sample of how a man can study people, but he is not a good pattern for general use.

#### 4. INFORMAL AND FORMAL STUDY OF PEOPLE

There are two general ways of studying people—informal and formal. The chief difference between informal and formal study as the terms are here used is that informal study is less systematic than formal study. The purpose of either type may be definite and the results may be accurate. Most study is informal, as in the examples just given. The pattern for self-study given in the first section of this chapter is an example of a plan for formal study.

(1) *Informal study of people.* We have just seen that there are many ways of studying people informally. By talking to them, by watching them in action, by looking at their clothes, and so on, we learn much about people. These are informal ways of studying them. Since we often need to judge strangers, the example of informal study which follows will illustrate the problem of judging a new boy in school and the new boy's problem of judging other boys.

a. *Judging a newcomer.* A new boy arrived very early on the first day of school. The other boys were ready to "choose sides" for baseball. The new boy was dressed a little too well to be accepted at once by the others, but his movements and general physical setup looked promising. The captains of the opposing teams began to choose their players. After they had selected four or five, however, they hesitated. One of them then chose the new boy, mumbling his words and signaling to the boy so that the other captain did not notice what had been done. After two or three more players had been named, the other captain also selected the new boy. Instantly the new boy announced with gusto, "Heck! I was chose on the other side." This boy was at once accepted. From this informal account you can judge fairly accurately the age, social

background, and appearance of the new boy, and you may also know much about the other boys.

b. *The newcomer's problem.* A newcomer is both judge and judged, and since first impressions are taken seriously by most persons, there is usually an attempt to make a favorable showing when one meets strangers. Many persons are so skillful, however, either in concealing their traits or in overemphasizing their best qualities, that first impressions should be kept open for later revision. Judgments about a newcomer depend, moreover, on the group that he enters. Some members of the group may admire quick frankness, while others may admire depth that cannot be measured at once. The newcomer's problem is that of trying to be all things to all persons.

Indeed a volume could be written on the art of being skillful as a newcomer. Such a volume would include such points as these: how to pick and impress the leaders of a new group; how to pick those who almost blindly follow anyone and how to win their good will; how to hold something in reserve for later use; how to avoid premature friendships and misplaced confidence; how to dress; how to adapt language to strangers; when to be silent and what to be silent about; and so on. The experienced person does not need to wait long for cues that will point a good course of action in each of these directions. Practice in meeting strangers, applying for positions, and making friends is like practice in other situations, and by the study of such points as those just mentioned, it can be made more effective. The importance of friendships and good will makes such practice necessary for us. The main points here, as in other social relationships, are (1) that we should know ourselves and (2) that we should have ourselves

under control and ready for whoever may come into our lives.

The newcomer's problem has been emphasized here because all of us are newcomers many times in life. Every time that we meet strangers, we, as well as the strangers, face this problem. *Our approach to a stranger is the stranger's key to us.* He will study us and we must study him. If we are applying to the stranger for a position, the two points just named are especially valuable—we must know ourselves and we must have ourselves under control.

Service-station men know a great deal about meeting all kinds of people. One lesson that they can teach is this: Meet people in a friendly way. The experience of these men shows that such an approach pays in dollars and cents as well as in good will. Skill as a newcomer paves the road to success whether we are talking to one person privately or to a thousand persons in a public address. First impressions are the foundation of the final judgments of people.

c. *Why newcomers are judged wrongly.* A serious difficulty in judging people accurately is caused by the extreme inconsistency of their conduct. Some of our acquaintances are, as we say, up one day and down the next. Plainly such persons need help, but we may have neither time nor sufficient interest to aid them. In such cases we sometimes give them a "limited rating"; that is, we regard them as undependable or fair-weather friends. Greater charity in rating them might lead to disaster for them as well as for ourselves, for we cannot predict their conduct. We need to distinguish between extreme inconsistency, which is always dangerous, and a healthy variety of behavior, which gives spice to life. The person who varies

his behavior effectively may rise very high at times, but he seldom falls very low.

(2) *Formal study of people.* The personal inventory is an example of formal study of people. Formal study of people occurs also when a manager selects an employee, when a salesman tries to sell his wares, when a chairman selects a committee, when you select a teacher—if you have a choice—and so on. With some persons it is a daily affair; with others it occurs seldom.

a. *Studying general evidence about people.* One way of studying people formally consists of collecting and examining general evidence about them. This evidence is classified under such headings as judgment, tact, appearance, disposition, and initiative. A high score on such qualities shows excellence in the person who is being judged. Three difficulties arise, however, in this kind of judging: (1) The person who judges may lack either ability or the desire to study people accurately and definitely; (2) the person who is being judged may not be living up to his possibilities; and (3) the qualities listed are so general that they fail to show what a person will do in a particular situation.

(a) *Finding out how the very best judges study people.* Anyone who deals with people can be trained to look for the same things that the very best judges see. In the case of tact, for example, the competent judge does as the painter did when he talked to Mr. Lincoln. Instead of judging character by merely looking at a person, the good judge induces the person to say or do something in a natural, unguarded way. This is why so many important decisions are made on golf courses—in such a game the observer can see his man in action and under exacting, though fairly informal, conditions. By making observations in this way, the judge



has a sample of conduct by which to estimate a man. Although this sample is not a complete picture of the man, it is better than a still smaller sample. An expert judge can also tell a good deal about a person by talking with him to find out his interests. The expert notices not only what is said and how it is said, but also what is left unsaid. He is aware, of course, that the words used may play tricks on himself as well as on the other person. Sets of questions, like those in the personal inventory, are sometimes used in this way; after practice in asking such questions, many persons become competent judges.

(b) *Watching people under a variety of conditions.* The second difficulty in judging people—that the person being judged may not be living up to his possibilities—is partly covered by the preceding paragraph. If the judge sees the person in action under a variety of conditions, he can tell whether or not the person is fulfilling the promise of his talent, at least as far as the observations go.

(c) *Understanding the terms used when people are discussed.* The third difficulty—that of judging in terms of general qualities—can be reduced by attempting to divide a general trait into definite and specific items. *Tact*, for example, then becomes a general term for saying the right thing at the right time, understanding people, pressing ahead diplomatically for a desired response, overlooking things that are of little importance, absence of sarcasm, and so forth. This plan would be more effective than it is, except for the fact that a person's qualities cannot be added up like so many pounds of sugar. One's qualities are like chemicals that form a compound rather than like a sum of objects that can be taken apart and judged separately. For this reason the best judges of people have to depend partly on their common sense and wait for further evi-

dence, which comes from observing a larger sample of conduct.

b. *Studying the results of tests.* Still more formal study of people is made with the use of tests of intelligence, knowledge, performance, and physical fitness. To these are added records of schooling, previous training, experience, and employment. If personal appearance is essential for success in a position, a photograph is included in the collection, though competent judges have found out long ago that good persons may be either ugly or handsome. Some of our most desperate criminals have more pleasing faces and better-shaped heads than some of our greatest leaders and geniuses. A story is told of an important executive who, after a hunting trip, went, unkempt, to the employment officer of a large industrial plant. He was given a blank to fill out while he was being observed. After he had finished he was told that there was no work for untrained men. Soon afterward he returned, well-groomed, and as he was not recognized as the "tramp" who had previously applied for work, he was told that he was just the kind of man who was needed in an executive position. That was a situation in which clothes, soap, and a razor made the man, according to the superficial judgment of the employment officer. Judging by appearances is frequently a most inaccurate procedure.

*What you do now*—your conduct today and its effects—*has greater weight than what you may seem to be able to do.* For this reason the questions in the personal inventory for self-study and improvement given earlier in this chapter emphasize your *present* conduct. By changing the questions in the inventory slightly, you can make a practical inventory for studying other people formally. If you do so, try to be as fair with others as you have been with yourself.

## 5. STUDYING SITUATIONS

Men who have gone to one of our most famous colleges assert that their most valuable course was the one in which they studied "How to Estimate a Situation." Estimating a situation consists chiefly of three parts: (1) sizing up the situation in general; (2) deciding what to do, if anything; and (3) following a plan, in the manner discussed in Chapter VI under "harnessing ourselves."

A complete account of how any situation has been studied would fill a book. A short account can suggest only general points. The five examples presented here are samples of situations that are being studied—that are still going on.

(1) *The situation of a downtrodden people.* Do you believe that people ought to live? If so, which of the following conditions of life should they have: a place to live, choice of a place to live, use of their own products, choice of employment, legal protection, family and friends, and education? When Albert Schweitzer was a young man he answered *Yes* to all these questions. At sixty years of age he is now a noted musician, theologian, philosopher, physician, and philanthropist.

About forty years ago Schweitzer was deeply affected by a statue of a Negro in a European city. He then decided to study the situation of the Negro race in Africa. He became as thoroughly familiar as he could with their hardships and suffering under their European oppressors, and he decided that the best thing to do was to prepare himself to fight leprosy, sleeping sickness, and other diseases that plagued Africa. He found the possibility of helping the Negro race full of difficulties. His decision, as he knew, would require him to begin a new career, that of a physi-

cian; but his study of the situation, together with his ideal of going wherever truth might lead him, left no other way open. After years of study in Germany he sailed to the French Congo, where he established a temporary mission and hospital. The development of a great hospital then became his lifework. To finance it he has given organ recitals and lectures in Europe, written many books, and solicited money from friends.

Schweitzer is an example of an able man who created a distinguished career that has been helpful to other people as well as interesting to himself. He studied a situation and made a decision that compelled him to abandon the military affairs of his own nation and also to place his career as a musician and philosopher in the background.

(2) *The stratosphere as a situation.* Studying a situation about fifteen miles above the earth is the task that Piccard, the scientist, has set for himself. When visited recently by another student of the stratosphere, he was preparing for a new flight, his ambition being not merely to rise higher than anyone else has risen, but rather to acquire knowledge that will have great practical value.

This situation involves Piccard in true experimentation. He must find out in advance as definitely as he can both the need for new information and the conditions that he will face at a high altitude. He has studied carefully the flights that have been made by himself and others, including the unsuccessful ones. When visited, he was trying to perfect his instruments for taking desired measurements of temperature, air currents, pressure, and other conditions. Besides the equipment directly necessary for his observation, he was studying many other things on which the success of his flight depended, such as raising money for the undertaking, the materials for his huge balloon,

cleansing the balloon, a compound to protect his cabin windows from being clouded, the protection of the balloon in descent, the temperature of balloon gas, long-distance photography by infrared rays through clouds, and the geography of landing areas. No precaution that either he or his assistants could think of was overlooked. During his flight he planned to conduct experiments at different altitudes, and after the flight—if successful—he expected to study his records in the hope of finding better working principles for science.

(3) *The planet Mars as a situation.* The planet Mars has for a long time attracted popular interest. People have wondered whether or not it is or could be inhabited by beings like ourselves, and whether or not we can signal to its inhabitants. Idle fancy and serious thought have given many answers to these questions. Let us see how modern science studies this situation.

Instead of assuming that Mars is inhabited, the scientist examines the conditions on the planet. Photography in light of different colors has been used in this study. Red light can pierce the haze of atmosphere better than violet light. Photographs with red light are, therefore, more clear than those made with violet light in indicating atmosphere. By using the spectroscope, astronomers have found very little oxygen and water vapor in the atmosphere of Mars. The temperature is believed to be more than 100 degrees below zero. Both polar areas of Mars seem to be covered with ice. The appearance of these areas changes with the seasons, being darker in spring and more yellow in autumn. The surface of Mars has large areas that are marked by narrow, straight lines, but astronomers disagree about whether or not the lines have been caused artificially. Faced with these conditions, Dr. Walter S. Adams of

Mount Wilson Observatory concludes that any vegetation on Mars must be rudimentary, requiring little oxygen. Until more encouraging information is obtained, one would be justified in doubting the existence of inhabitants on Mars.

(4) *A national situation.* When Kemal Atatürk became president of Turkey, his people were Oriental in ideas and customs. He set about changing their habits one by one. Men still wore fezzes and women wore veils. After trying in many ways to change this custom, he outmoded the fez by wearing a hat and having his cabinet do the same. Hats became the style. He also prohibited the wearing of veils. As Moslem priests had forbidden artists to represent the human form in picture or sculpture, Kemal overcame this prejudice by sitting for a portrait and having a statue made of himself. Villages now take pride in their public portraits and statues of him. The Turkish alphabet was so difficult to learn that few Turks could read or write. Kemal employed scholars to revise the alphabet. After the scholars had worked for years on this problem, he solved it himself almost overnight, and then made co-education compulsory, despite the fact that Moslem priests objected to all these changes. He forbade the wearing of clerical garb except in mosques and on the way to and from services, and further curbed the influence of the priests. Kemal's success appears to be due to his own superiority and to the backwardness of his people. His study of the situation seems to have shown him that the best way to modernize Turkey is to acquire power and reputation and then to set an example that must be followed.

(5) *The weather situation.* In pioneer days Nebraska needed settlers. Railroads had been built and their success

depended on patronage; real-estate promoters had acquired land and their prosperity depended on sales. But lack of sufficient rainfall for crops on the high plains made settlers timid. This situation was studied carefully by interested persons who developed propaganda—one-sided arguments—to promote their cause.

As the historian looks upon this situation, he finds that promoters were eager to reap a financial harvest and the early settlers ready to accept propaganda. Many descriptive pamphlets were written to convince willing believers that Nebraska would have an abundant rainfall as soon as the land was cultivated. Walter Kollmorgan of the University of Nebraska has presented samples of this propaganda; in his article on "Rainmakers on the Plains,"<sup>1</sup> he quotes from the Nebraska State Horticultural Society's report for 1878-79 as follows:

In a word, it (rain) is caused by the plow . . . it converts a desert into a farm or garden. . . . A desert, however, is the result of conditions that can be controlled by the genius and industry of man. . . . The moisture contained in the atmosphere over this new-made surface of living green will not dissipate and pass away with the winds, as formerly, but will condense, by the well-known law, both as dew at night and into clouds, under the influence of electric currents. With the clouds comes precipitation, which will be greatly increased as the condensing surface increases by the constant efforts of the farmer to enlarge his domain of crops. . . .

With a logic that cannot rest we are forced to this conclusion, that the agencies of civilization now in action are such as will secure a complete victory over the wilderness and waste places of western territory. The plow will go forward; "God speed the plow."

<sup>1</sup> *Scientific Monthly*, February, 1935.

The change in vegetation that came with the plow so impressed another distinguished pioneer that he thought water was assured for all the dry areas, if settlers would but have the courage to advance. Already he had found new springs bursting forth and had discovered water in old dry creek beds where it had not flowed for ages. The vegetation had changed and prosperity would follow immediately upon cultivation:

The changing vegetation of the State proves the same fact. There was a time within the memory of many now living when buffalo grass was the most conspicuous vegetable form west of the Missouri. . . . Now how changed. It has almost entirely disappeared for two hundred miles west of the Missouri. There is comparatively little of it now on the third hundred. Every year it is retreating further westward. Its place is supplied with grasses indigenous to moister climates.

One of the most famous agricultural writers of the time added his testimonial to those already given. In 1885 he waxed eloquent at the state fair:

There is just as much water in the bright clear sky above you at this hour as there is on the most densely cloudy day, or as there is during the severest rain storm. Electrical conditions, or currents of colder air, or other influences lower the temperature, the hidden moisture comes out and falls, as I have described.

As neighboring Kansas settles up and breaks the prairie sod away out to its western border those parching winds that formerly came up into Nebraska and still come at some point, will be heard of no more.

As Kollmorgan points out, this was a convincing address; for eloquence was then more persuasive than rea-



soning would have been. It mattered not that the orator's statements about plowing the ground to condense the moisture were untrue or misleading. His audience wanted security, and so his arguments were both convenient and satisfying. But within ten years, crop failure after crop failure literally drove out the settlers. In one season over eighteen thousand prairie schooners crossed the Missouri River, eastward bound, leaving the land of false promises. Those years of drought, like 1934, found many people ready to believe that their lands were changing to a permanent desert.<sup>1</sup>

(6) *What these examples show.* Many details have been omitted from each of these brief accounts of how people study situations. For example the reader can see that Schweitzer must have been troubled deeply when he changed his career. Probably he thought for days or months about the advantages and disadvantages of making the change. Many persons in such a crisis take a sheet of paper, list the advantages in one column and the disadvantages in another, and then try to weigh one column against the other. They often seek counsel from friends. Frequently they find strong reasons on both sides, and finally decide that in spite of sacrifice or hardship, one course is better, even though neither is entirely good or entirely bad. Such preliminary study protects the person against difficulties that may arise, no matter what choice is made. Schweitzer probably wished many times that he had followed the other course, but after a decision had been made, his periods of regret were shorter than his

<sup>1</sup> For those who wish to know the facts about the plains, Chief Kincer of the Climate and Crop Division of the United States Weather Bureau has collected records that show how the "weather man" seems to repeat himself every thirty or forty years. (*Scientific Monthly*, July, 1934.) In 1935 some of these areas were deluged with floods.

periods of satisfaction, for his new course gave him a pattern of life to which he devoted his best efforts.

Piccard's study of the stratosphere illustrates the elaborate preliminary work included in an experimental investigation. After he had found his problem, his next step was to survey the situation as fully as possible, finding out what others had discovered and considering these discoveries in connection with the results of his previous flights. You can see the sharp difference between thorough experimentation of this kind and the so-called experimentation in which a person merely tries something new or "takes a dare" without much consideration either before or after he acts. The study of the planet Mars further illustrates true experimentation and shows the difference between wild guessing about a situation and careful study of it.

Kemal Atatürk's work shows a combination of great power and ability in effecting reforms to modernize Turkey. After having been baffled by the numerous difficulties of his nation, he finally gained sufficient influence to have his plans accepted by statesmen who were his own followers. Then each successful plan created greater influence, until at last he has been able to attack the central and most difficult problem of Turkey—the Moslem domination of her people.

The weather situation of Nebraska illustrates the way in which people study conditions to find only the kind of evidence they seek. The study was a failure in many respects, because the kind of information needed by the prospective settlers was omitted from the propaganda. It is unlikely, however, that all the persons involved in the study were rascals. Indeed many of them seemed sincere in their beliefs. They suffered, however, from the blindness

that often defeats people when they are too greatly interested in their own side of a situation. Even today many situations are studied from only one point of view, but the early Nebraska situation should be a warning to us. It emphasizes the importance of noticing what is left out when the "results" of a study are presented to us.

(7) *Summary of studying situations.* How people study situations successfully can be summarized briefly under three headings:

1. They size up a situation.
  - a. They make a general survey.
  - b. They note the essentials of the situation.
  - c. They consider what is already known about the situation.
  - d. They consider the possibilities and probabilities of the situation.
  - e. They make a clear-cut preliminary analysis.
  - f. They decide that the situation is worthy of action.
2. They decide what to do.
  - a. They make a plan.
  - b. They make appropriate long-time or short-time plans.
  - c. They divide the difficulties and attack them one by one.
  - d. They prepare by further study of essentials, including help from others who have studied the situation.
  - e. They locate any possible help from any source.
3. They follow the plan.
  - a. They follow the best course, whether it is easy or not.
  - b. They finish what they start, unless the reasons for changing are better than those for going on.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. People's actions are said to be caricatures or masks of their thoughts. How does this increase the difficulty of "every-

one's game"? Cite an illustration, such as an attempt to conceal thoughts or to "show off." In this connection, you may be interested in reading Eugene O'Neill's play, *Strange Interlude*, a fine illustration of the ways people hide their thoughts.

2. Friendship has been said to depend on the gossip that people have in common. How much truth do you see in this statement? What aspects of friendship does it omit?

3. Why should we begin the study of people with the study of ourselves? Compare your answer with Spinoza's: "It is not my business to point out the errors of others."

4. After you finish your personal inventory, make a definite plan for yourself and follow it.

5. Make a list of rules for studying people, including the points in the section entitled "Examples of Studying People."

6. What are the differences between informal and formal study of people? What are the advantages and difficulties of each type of study?

7. For several years before an Alaskan airplane tragedy, one of the highest-paid authors in America was a man who seldom wrote a paragraph that would have received a passing grade in an English class. Study the life of Will Rogers to see whether you can account for such an exceptional case. Why is it impractical for most people to disregard rules as he did?

8. Summarize each of the five examples of studying situations, pointing out the strong and weak points in the plans that were followed in these situations.

9. Select two situations that you think are worth studying. (The situations may be personal, problems of school life, or public affairs.) Study these situations, point by point, according to the outline given at the end of this chapter. Study one of the situations alone and the other with your parents, a group of your friends, or with your entire class.

10. Why do you think that the men who have taken a course on "How to Estimate a Situation" regard it as their most valuable course?

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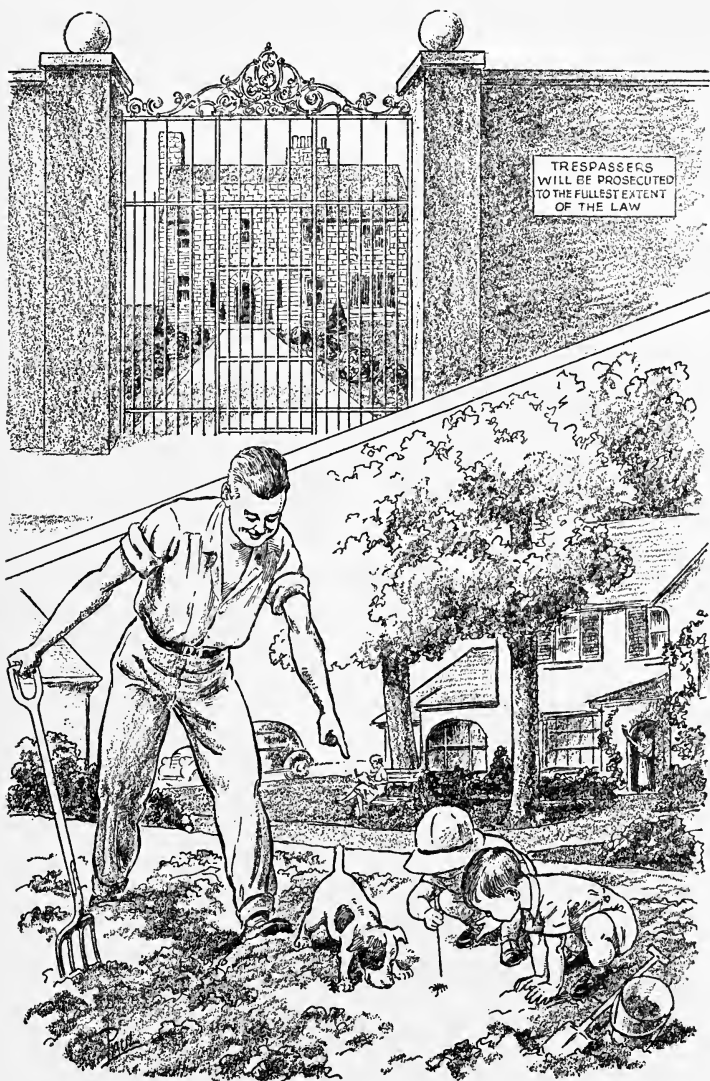
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# UNIT IV

## TYPES OF SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT





HOUSES *versus* HOMES



## CHAPTER XII

# Home Living

### I. YOUR PLACE IN YOUR HOME

DID you ever hear anyone say, "Children should be kept in their place?" If you heard this when you were a child, you probably, as you looked reproachfully at the person who said it, had thoughts that you tried to keep to yourself. As you may know, many parents share your resentment over such comments. At any rate there are at least two ways of thinking about the place of children in the home, and we cannot discuss your home living until we decide which of these two ways to select.

The first way of thinking of children in the home is that they are too young and immature to have any ideas worth hearing—they "should be seen but not heard." We dare not adopt this notion, lest you should stop reading this chapter at once. But there are other reasons why we may not take this view. One of the most important is that adults as well as children are sometimes better seen than heard.

The second way of thinking of children is that they help to make their homes. According to this view also, we can say that members of the younger generation should be kept in their place. But we mean something entirely different by the expression. As this chapter agrees with this

view, our next problem is to state what we mean by "their place."

How do children help to make their homes? Whether the child is very young or fully mature, it helps to make its home. The young child's enthusiasm for life, its buoyancy and its cheer, help many parents to avoid the hours of monotony that hang heavily over childless homes. With this mental freshness due to the presence of children, comes the stimulating activity of the child. The child's refreshing ideas, which lie behind its many questions, prod its parents to serious thought and study. Parents always have had difficulty in keeping abreast of the times in a changing world. The child's ideas supply a firsthand acquaintance with this rapidly changing world. The parent who takes his child's ideas seriously can keep his balance between the past and the present. Particularly is this true if the child takes a part in school, church, and other activities, including, of course, commercial employment. The child not only brings new ideas, but also helps its parents to relive many of their own interesting experiences—for nearly all parents relive childhood through their children. Finally by being orderly and by performing a variety of tasks, great and small, many young people make themselves quite indispensable to their elders.

When such contributions are made to the home, the child is in its place, and the place is a useful one in family life. To take this position in the home, the child must be willing to do its part and the parents must be willing for it to do so. The happiness and general welfare of any family depend on all its members. Both parents and children must co-operate and contribute in making a home. Whatever your age, you have a contribution to make toward the home living of your family.

## 2. PEOPLE AS PRODUCTS OF THEIR HOMES

The making of human beings depends largely on two things. These two things or processes usually go on together. First, *when problems are faced squarely and solved if possible*, as described in Chapter VI, *the individual side of a person is in the making*. Second, *when other people and social institutions are dealt with on a high mutual basis, the social side of a person is developing*. The home is an institution where problems arise and where people deal with each other on a mutual basis. Therefore the home produces much of what we call our real selves. Homes are so important in making people what they are that home living is treated apart from all other institutions, which will be discussed in the next chapters.

Homes are laboratories for human beings. If homes provided nothing but problems that could be either faced or dodged and social experiences that could be either lived or evaded, they would still be fairly good laboratories. But in homes problems *must* be faced and social experiences *must* be lived. There is no escape from these two means of development. No other institution rivals the home in these respects, for no other social institution compels us to join and live in it. Therefore the home is the best human laboratory. Some of the other reasons why the home provides superior conditions for problem solving and social life are given in the following pages.

(1) *The members of a family are intimate comrades*. If they are wise, the members of a family recognize that their lives will be most unhappy unless mutual adjustments are made for the benefit of the family as a whole. As we know, some people are unwise enough to think that a family can exist for the benefit of one person. The unwisdom of

such persons is advertised daily in newspapers to supply picturesque examples of people who have not matured. Homes in which people live together in sympathetic comradeship are so common that newspapers cannot make news of them, unless something unusual, such as a golden wedding, occurs. Such comradeship forms the basis for the values of a home.

(2) *Comradeship requires understanding.* Strangers are not comrades. Members of a family, on the other hand, have deep understanding of one another. While this understanding cannot be complete, it is usually more complete than any that can be found elsewhere. Badly misunderstood members of a family are probably more rare than most persons suppose. Such members are usually planning or doing something which, they believe, is beyond the comprehension of the rest of their family. Concealment is attempted for shallow reasons, with the result that such cases are often ridiculous. Daily life in a family makes concealment difficult; generally, though, when and if exposure of the nicely laid plot occurs, the understanding comrades of the family often save the erring member from chagrin. Whether the plot be good or bad, the sympathetic understanding of the family usually leads to a fresh start for the "misunderstood" member. Understanding helps in meeting not only such difficulties but also the numerous small matters that arise in daily life. It extends to the likes and dislikes of each member and aids in minor adjustments that have to be made. The attitudes of the members of a family toward many affairs of life are so well known in a home that such affairs can be discussed without the long explanations that are necessary with strangers.

(3) *Sympathetic understanding enables the home to be a counseling center.* Few, if any, problems are so intimate that

they cannot be discussed at home. Certainly no problem is too large or too small to hold counsel about with parents or brothers or sisters. Failures within the home as well as successes are family topics. Mutual interest in outcomes, frankness, sympathy, patience, and understanding give the counsel of our family advantages that are rare in that of even our better friends outside our homes.

(4) *Members of a family stimulate one another.* This stimulation begins with the young child when it is first encouraged to do something for itself. The first signs of speech, of response to music or art, or even of attempts to dress itself are encouraged in the infant. Later, vocational interests are stimulated, and often, by family counsel, these interests are given intelligent direction. Parents are so concerned with the accomplishments of children that they are seldom satisfied with either the amount or the quality of their children's achievements. Throughout childhood and adolescence, children face parental stimulation to do more and more and better and better. The stimulation works also in the opposite direction—children stimulate parents. As soon as a child arrives in a home, parents are stimulated to provide amply for it. Soon they notice that the child patterns its conduct after the parental models, and so they try to conduct themselves as suitable models for the child. Industry, patience, and many other desirable traits of character are stimulated in a home quite as much by children as by parents.

(5) *All members of a family are held responsible for conduct and for certain duties in their home.* With these responsibilities, comes further stimulation. If any member of this intimate group becomes cross or peevish, cheerful or calm, all others respond. Ill temper and tantrums are so costly everywhere that no family can afford to tolerate them. Therefore

every member of a household assumes the responsibility of setting the stage for even tempers. Unfortunately the stage is set badly at times, but the responsibility is recognized.

In pioneer days home duties differed from those of today, and in many cases they took more time than is now required. This has led superficial observers to think that the modern child has nothing to do at home. There is still plenty to do in most homes if anyone looks for it. Keeping any or all rooms fairly orderly, especially on Sundays when the morning paper seems to have an affinity for the floor, is a major responsibility in any house. Other possibilities of modern home responsibilities will appear in the next section of this chapter.

(6) *The interdependence of members of the family group for their happiness and general welfare provides experience in sharing in common, receiving in common, and working together.* In this respect the small family group has advantages over any of the utopian governments that have been proposed. The family is bound together by affection that far excels the fellowship of a large group, such as a nation. Its members often go much more than halfway in making adjustments to one another, for they know that they must do so. Utopias are often described as places where all members share in common and work together, but most of the time no provision is made for the affection necessary in such an organization. A principle in a utopian government is usually that only those who work will be allowed a share in the common food. The family makes no attempt to enforce such a regulation. Instead although it assumes that each member will do his part, affection as well as custom prevents the denial of necessities if they exist. The home is, therefore, a training place in co-operative living, and yet

it makes adjustments to meet the needs of its members. It attempts, earnestly and affectionately, to strike a happy balance between responsibilities and benefits, carefully guarding the mental and physical welfare of all the family. By stimulating all members—the father and children as well as the mother—to increased responsibility, it trains for co-operation in both giving and taking.

(7) *Homes provide desirable conflict.* Few successful homes run smoothly all the time, and from one important point of view, they should not do so. There is such a thing as *desirable conflict*. Conflict is desirable, not chiefly because many persons like a good fight occasionally, but because every normal person needs training to face the obstacles that he will have to meet sooner or later. Well-planned conflicts are the only cure for the spoiled child or adult, since the spoiling is due mainly to pampering and giving way to the child who shouts, yells, or bullies. Such a person may have begun life quite normally, but no one intelligently and successfully blocked his faulty infantile course, and so he failed to develop normally. He depended too much on others, who, in response to his cries, or otherwise, allowed him to develop physically into adolescence or adulthood without developing socially beyond the juvenile stage. If he should be strong, he may continue throughout life to get what he seems to want, and if he should be otherwise intelligent, he may have many admirers, but still he is in that stage of unintelligent selfhood that characterizes the two-year-old who thinks he has the world but wants the moon also. A home that stimulates co-operative responsibility provides desirable conflicts which teach its members the meaning of intelligent selfhood. The conflicts are adapted, as responsibilities are, to fit the person, and when the needed adjustment has been made,

merited praise is given. The home that evades the responsibility of teaching the need of recognizing other people's feelings and interests sends its children socially crippled into the world at large, where the conflicts are often too severe for the child's ability to meet them. Desirable conflicts occur in work and play outside the home, but the home is the best place for the intelligent directing of such conflicts.

(8) *Attention to physical education begins at home.* Indeed all education begins at home. First come physical habits and elementary knowledge of the body. For many people physical habits became fixed before school had begun. Likes and dislikes for different kinds of food seem to depend on the time when and the conditions under which the food is first presented to the child, for tastes are usually easy to acquire early in life. Regularity is usually learned at home in eating, sleeping, and in the elimination of waste bodily products. Many active games are also among the benefits of home training, particularly if parents or brothers and sisters are interested in them.

(9) *General education at home.* Hobbies, quiet indoor games, and the study of many school subjects are started at home. For many of these beginnings, both physical and mental, parents rather than children are responsible. Since most young people will become parents, it would be wise for you to start to consider the possibilities of the home in providing a good beginning for children. Think, for example, of the cost to a child, his parents, and the state when bad beginnings are made. This cost has never been computed, but to remedy careless home beginnings in the use of English alone, the United States probably spends millions of dollars annually. This cost of remedial work runs to billions a year if we add the bad beginnings in



science by way of superstitions, and in discourtesy, selfishness, cruelty, and "spoiling"! In sharp contrast with homes that give bad beginnings to children, are those which give excellent beginnings in various directions.

The "only child," like the proverbial minister's son, has received so much unfavorable attention that his case deserves special mention at this point. An investigation of the problem of the "only child" has been reported recently. As the report states, such a child is sometimes showered with questionable blessings that protect him from the more rigorous social climate in which other children live. He lacks brothers and sisters who might keep him in place by desirable conflicts and other means. His parents may be too lenient because of their centering a misguided sentimental affection upon him. It is found, however, that there are numerous spoiled children in families with more than one child, for not only parents but also brothers and sisters may pamper and otherwise misguide a child. The report indicates that excellent homes are as likely to produce excellent children when there is only one child as when there are more than one child. In brief the "only child" is like all other children—his development depends on the quality of the home and not on the quantity of children in it.

The home as a laboratory for human beings has been discussed here with special reference to the good and excellent home, because such homes are the most desirable ones to cultivate and because they are the most common. It is admitted, however, that most homes can be improved in some of the nine respects here discussed:

1. Intimate comradeship
2. Understanding of the members of the home

3. Counseling center
4. Stimulation of one another
5. Responsibility for conduct and certain duties
6. Interdependence
7. Desirable conflict
8. Attention to physical education
9. Beginnings of general education

The next generation of parents can and should improve the home. Such improvement will come when parents recognize these points and plan definitely to realize them in their home living. In such homes both children and adults can be themselves, whether good or bad, more fully than anywhere else—a preservation of individuality which is a great accomplishment. It is clear also that homes do much more than has been sketched here; religious training and the cultivation of interests in art and music are additional examples. Enough has been said to show that the better this laboratory is, the better its members will be, and that all homes provide problems and social experiences that are required for the development of human beings.

### 3. RECENT CHANGES THAT AFFECT HOME LIVING

(1) *Comfort and convenience.* A few days ago a high school boy named Fred trudged homeward with his friend Dick. They carried their coats on their sleeveless arms, for the temperature was 110 in the shade. When they reached Fred's house, they entered and sighed with relief as the cool air rushed forward to meet them. After a sneeze or two Dick drew on his coat—the house temperature was just above 70 degrees.

Next they went to the kitchen for refreshments. In the electric refrigerator they found a bottle of orange juice. After filling two glasses and adding ice cubes to make certain of their drinks' coolness, they turned to go to the living room. Just then Fred noticed that the oven was hot, and then he remembered that his mother had gone to a meeting of her music club. All this caused no surprise, for the oven was set at the proper temperature and the clock was adjusted to switch off the current at six o'clock.

The boys then proceeded to comfortable chairs, Fred pausing to turn on the radio. The announcer informed them, in French, that the hour of midnight had just arrived at the broadcasting station to which they were listening. Fred then dialed an American station in time to hear the final innings of a Western baseball game. Sipping and listening, the two boys sat quietly until Dick asked suddenly, "What do you suppose Benjamin Franklin would think of this house?" Fred then recalled a classroom discussion of life in colonial America, and replied, "Let's play host to the old scientist and take him through the house." Here ends the report of Fred and Dick and their imaginary guest. You can supply the rest of the story by taking Dr. Franklin through your own house.

This inspection of your home will convince you that no one lived in such a house fifty years ago. If you turn to a good magazine on modern houses, you will be convinced also that nearly all houses are now far below their physical possibilities. This fact indicates that houses will continue to change greatly in their equipment. The effects of the changes rather than the changes themselves concern us in this section. The question is: Have we learned to live in our new houses?

The modern house is one of the strongest signs that we

have passed from the age of machines to an age of power and machines. The use of power-driven machinery gives women such an increase in leisure that many men, especially old men, fear that women will lose their souls and wreck their homes. This cry of danger is not a new one; it was raised in the days of our great-grandparents when spinning wheels and looms went out of their houses and sewing machines came in. Even after that, "woman's work was never done," and it may be that in this respect, history will come close to repeating itself. At any rate there are many home activities to fill the leisure of any intelligent, resourceful woman. Women may find themselves in the position of the late Edward Bok, who a year after his retirement from the editorship of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, wrote that he had never been so busy.

The comforts of modern homes were unknown in the past. Our homes are or can be well lighted. If they were as badly lighted as Abraham Lincoln's boyhood home, few persons would be rash enough to endanger their eyesight by reading as much as effective living now demands. Our homes have or may have comfortable furniture for sitting and sleeping. Only a person who was physically dog-tired would sit long in many of the chairs of the past, or rest in the old straw beds. Our homes have or may have an even and favorable temperature throughout the year. Once accustomed to these homes, few persons would anticipate with pleasure an evening at home under the old conditions, nor would many of the old homes be conducive to modern homework or modern hospitality.

(2) *Diet and sanitation.* The home comfort just mentioned was present, of course, in a few early houses, but out of reach of the masses, and for rich and poor, malnutrition was common. The well to do with gout and the poor with

scurvy gave evidence of this. Undernourishment, combined with malnutrition, was also common. Sons of wealthy families were believed to be well fed when such diet as the following was provided:

Sunday—at noone—boyled beefe and poradge with 5 oz. of bread

at night—Roast Mutton (The Public supping)

Monday—noone—Water grewell with currants  
night—cheese

Tuesday—noone—boyled beef  
night—cheese

Wednesday—noone—milk porrage bread & butter  
night—cheese

Thursday—noone—boyled beef  
night—cheese

Friday—noone—milk porrage bread & butter  
night—pudding pyes without bread

Saturday—milk porrage with bread & butter at noone  
night—cheese

Every morning  $2\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of bread and a supp of drink.  
5 oz. of bread att every meal, dynner & supper.

This was the weekly fare throughout the year 1678 at an English school for boys. The boys who begged for more food were punished for their greed!

Food in the modern home differs from that of the past in both variety and balance. Applied science has shown how to obtain desired foods, how to balance them for a healthful diet, how to prepare them quickly and effectively, and how to determine the amount needed by persons

of different ages and physiques and in different occupations. Surveys of health, mortality, and efficiency show the beneficial effects of these applications of science. No small part of this advance is due to the medical profession, which has turned from bloodletting and the scattering of contagion and infection to scientific practice and counsel. Sanitary engineering and improved transportation and communication also have contributed to these changes. Applied art and improved courtesy, which are modern handmaidens of science, have shown how to serve foods attractively and graciously. If good food leads to better health, and if good health leads to better dispositions, these changes in food improve personal relationships in home life.

(3) *Home literature, art, and music.* Excellent literature, art, and music add increasing charm to modern homes. As rapidly as interest in these directions improves, the quality and quantity of the supply can increase. States that provide a minimum of a dollar a year per person for public libraries can supply every home with excellent books, new and old. The underprivileged house of the past, with only four or five musty books, the *Farm and Fireside*, and a borrowed copy of a local weekly, can change to a house of books and periodicals at the will of its owners. Excellent art, at least in reproductions, is now within reach of everyone—it can be had almost for the asking. Music of distinction, including the works of the great masters, can now be universal in homes through the mediums of voice, piano, violin, phonograph, and radio.

(4) *Parent education.* Parents have changed recently no less than the mechanical equipment of houses. Without irreverence to parents of past times one may contrast them educationally with those of the present. Much of what is

now known by parents was unknown to scientists fifty years ago. Parents of today, men as well as women, regard modern knowledge of the care of infants as indispensable—their food, clothing, sleep, and bodily habits. Many parents have acquainted themselves also with the best that is known of emotional development and general character training. To this is added greater knowledge of science, literature, the arts, and other subjects than their own parents had opportunities to acquire. If present-day parents hold fast to the good of the past and if they use their present equipment effectively, they are, in these respects, better than parents of earlier times.

(5) *Outside employment of women.* Two major difficulties have recently developed in homes. One is the adjustment of homes to the outside employment of women. Whether or not a satisfactory adjustment can be made generally to such employment remains to be seen. A triple responsibility is placed upon employed mothers: housekeeping, outside work, and at least partial care of children. Whatever solution is found for this problem will come probably after much planning and experiment by all the members of the family. As certainly as women continue to have careers outside their homes, just so certainly must the problem be solved. It is quite possible that fathers could aid in making this adjustment, but such added responsibility would be unwelcome to many. Children, too, may be able to aid more than they have done in the past. This aid is being encouraged by the co-operation of many schools which arrange to have older pupils go to homes at different times of the day to care for children whose mothers are absent. Other schools as well as other agencies provide day nurseries for young children.

(6) *Heightened expense.* Another major difficulty comes

from the heightened expense of maintaining a home. If the advantages of modern life, including recreation and insurance, are to be made available to everyone, it is estimated that the income of the average American family of four persons would have to be over four thousand dollars a year. At present such a condition seems visionary. To obtain this amount for each family, we should need international financial readjustments, and to use it wisely, domestic and personal adjustments to the responsibility of an age of plenty. Critics of plans for hastening the age of plenty assert that these two kinds of readjustment are about equally difficult. It is doubtful, however, whether any family would spend this amount less wisely than certain wealthy persons now do. If human resources would be increased by giving every family an opportunity to enjoy all the conveniences of a truly modern life, the national gain would be obvious. The principal trouble about the four-thousand-dollar income seems to be in getting it.

(7) *The movement to cities.* Every form of home living has been changed by the growth of cities and the movement of population toward them. With over half of our people in urban areas, compact housing is necessary. Increased interdependence between homes and other institutions is caused by the need for supplies of all kinds. So much of the readjustment required by this new form of living is social, that the need for social training, emphasized in the discussion of homes as human laboratories, is greater than it has ever been. Without these laboratories we should not only be deprived of our homes but we should also lose our present-day civilization, for this civilization cannot exist without the social knowledge and skill on which co-operation depends.



If health, comfort, and leisure are desirable, well-equipped modern houses are, beyond question, better than houses of the past. But we have not yet learned how to get them or how to use them most effectively. Changes will be continuous; our problem is not that of trying to prevent them. Instead our problem is that of planning these changes, and at the same time, of training ourselves to make the best possible use of them, remembering that every improvement in housing increases our social responsibilities and obligations.

#### 4. STANDARDS OF HOME LIVING

No judgment can be made without a standard of judgment. The preceding pages call for standards that will help us to judge the qualities of a home. Eight standards of this kind have been developed by Miss Lita Bane of the University of Illinois, and have been included in an article on homemaking by Mrs. Mathilde C. Hader.<sup>1</sup> According to these experts, the excellence of a modern home can be judged by the answers given to the following questions:

1. Is the home *economically sound*?
2. Is the home *mechanically convenient*?
3. Is the home *physically healthful*?
4. Is the home *morally wholesome*?
5. Is the home *mentally stimulating*?
6. Is the home *artistically satisfying*?
7. Is the home *socially responsible*?
8. Is the home *a center of unselfish love and service*?

Later in the same article Mrs. Hader has presented the following outline of the activities that should be found

<sup>1</sup> *Teachers College Record*, Vol. XXI, April, 1930.

in a modern home. This outline is a detailed list of items to check in judging the quality of a home.

# I. Activities Furthering the Natural Development of Members of the Family Group

## A. Physical development

### 1. Provision of food

- a. Buying
- b. Receiving
- c. Storage
- d. Preservation
- e. Preparation
- f. Serving
- g. Disposal

### 2. Provision of clothing

- a. Buying
- b. Designing
- c. Construction
- d. Repair
- e. Cleaning
- f. Storage

### 3. Provision of shelter

- a. Buying or renting a home
- b. Furnishings and equipment
- c. Cleaning
- d. Heating, ventilating
- e. Repair
- f. Storage

### 4. Management

- a. Planning of all phases of work
- b. Supervision of domestic helpers
- c. Budgeting, keeping accounts
- d. Paying bills, and so on

5. Special care of children
  - a. Washing
  - b. Dressing and undressing
  - c. Feeding
  - d. Providing air and opportunity for exercise and play
6. Development and maintenance of health of family
  - a. Through study of hygiene<sup>\*</sup>
  - b. Through proper medical treatment
  - c. Through development of healthful physical habits
7. Care of sick members of the family

## B. Mental development.

1. Provision of environment conducive to a healthy state of mind
  - a. Arranging for restful colors, lines, lighting, and also for simplicity and quietude in surroundings
  - b. Guarding against external stimuli harmful to mental health, like loud or irritating noises, strong or otherwise disturbing light, disquieting interruptions, and sudden shocks
2. Constructive treatment of emotional life of family members
  - a. Working *toward* formation and maintenance of healthy emotional habits, such as honesty, self-control, cheerfulness, courage, aggressiveness, sympathy for others, willingness to submit to discipline, normal sex attitudes
  - b. Working *against* formation of bad emotional habits, such as fear, anger, rage, worry, jealousy, suspicion, depression, anxiety, discontent, restlessness, day-dreaming, antisocial or personally harmful manifestations of inferiority feelings

3. Aiding in development of inherent intellectual capacities
  - a. Encouraging efforts at intellectual concentration
  - b. Providing opportunities for studying methods of thinking
  - c. Creating mentally stimulating environment
  - d. Guarding against mental overwork

## II. Activities Favoring Development of Capacity for Mental Enrichment

- A. Encouraging the development of a well-rounded interest in environment
  1. Stimulating love of nature through
    - a. Gardening
    - b. Care of domestic animals
    - c. Outdoor sports
    - d. Travel, walking trips, camping
  2. Providing opportunity for forming contacts with other individuals
    - a. By maintaining active interrelations within family group
    - b. By attracting wide circle of friends to home
    - c. By seeking contacts with groups outside home
  3. Encouraging interest in reading by providing books, newspapers, and other reading matter
  4. Stimulating desire for aesthetic enjoyments
    - a. By creating beauty in home surroundings
    - b. By providing music in the home
    - c. By visiting places of natural beauty
    - d. By attending theaters, concerts, and so on
    - e. By visiting art galleries and other places where human work has created beauty.
- B. Making efforts at securing creative forms of activity for all

1. Encouraging the finding of creative vocational outlets for all adult members of the group
2. Providing chance for creative occupations as avocations, such as music, dramatics, painting, decorative art, manual arts
3. Engaging children in creative forms of play which may lead to lasting interests and valuable productive activity later in life

### III. Activities Aiming at the Attainment of Social Efficiency for Family Group

- A. Securing economic independence of family group
  1. Working to provide income
  2. Training for vocation
  3. Maintaining or developing vocational efficiency
- B. Making family relationships educate for good social attitudes
  1. Encouraging independence and self-reliance
  2. Showing consideration for the interests of others
  3. Engaging in group activities in order to develop the ability to work with others for common ends
  4. Dealing in a constructive manner with conflicts within the group and between the family and outside groups

The rating given to a home on these standards depends, of course, on the members of the home. We need standards, therefore, for judging ourselves as home members. Many of the items of the personal inventory given in Chapter XI can be used for this purpose. Miss Mary Frances Inman has prepared the following check list for the social customs of the home. This list was prepared for girls, but by the inclusion of the changes in parentheses, it can be used equally well by boys.

## SOCIAL CUSTOMS

Check (✓) at the right if you do the following at every opportunity.

- |                                                                                           |                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Let your family know you appreciate them by doing things for them without being asked. | 16. Express thanks for gifts promptly.                                                   |
| 2. Show courtesy to each member of the family and others.                                 | 17. Study, and try to develop, some of your strong personality traits.                   |
| 3. Practice good manners in the home.                                                     | 18. Try to overcome your weak personality traits.                                        |
| 4. Use good table manners.                                                                | 19. Refrain from sulking and pouting when you do not get your own way.                   |
| 5. Take your share of responsibility.                                                     | 20. Refrain from teasing your younger brother or sister.                                 |
| 6. Consciously share in helping to maintain harmony in the home.                          | 21. Refrain from asking for things that the family cannot afford to give you.            |
| 7. Plan and carry out some wholesome recreation for your family.                          | 22. Refrain from criticizing your home.                                                  |
| 8. Heed the advice of your father or mother as to your choice of friends.                 | 23. Refrain from criticizing your friends.                                               |
| 9. Heed the advice of your father or mother as to entertainments.                         | 24. Refrain from criticizing your brothers, sisters, or other relatives.                 |
| 10. Heed the advice of your father or mother as to how late you should be out at night.   | 25. Act your part properly with your boy (or girl) friend.                               |
| 11. Act as hostess (or host) when mother or father is not at home.                        | 26. Co-operate in community activities such as church suppers, socials, clubs, 4-H Club. |
| 12. Introduce people properly.                                                            | 27. Practice and develop a hobby such as:                                                |
| 13. Converse easily.                                                                      | basketball      voice                                                                    |
| 14. Be hospitable to guests of the family as well as your own.                            | tennis          painting                                                                 |
| 15. Plan for and entertain your friends in your own home.                                 | reading        sewing                                                                    |
|                                                                                           | music          cooking                                                                   |
|                                                                                           | 28. List any other you have.                                                             |

These three lists of standards suggest answers to many home problems, ranging from routine activities to etiquette and hospitality. Homes that receive high ratings on these points are socializing centers for all members of the family, and not small military camps for the exercising of domineering tendencies. Such homes are places to live in rather than prisons from which fathers, mothers, and all the children long to escape.

### 5. KEEPING HOMES FIT FOR THEIR USES

A family cannot make a nation, but it can make a home. By making a home, the family gives the best possible preparation for helping to make all social institutions effective. The family can do its part only when all its members do theirs. As each member helps to make the family, so the family helps to make each person. Mutual opportunity and mutual responsibility are necessary for a home. Instead of interfering with homes, modern science, art, music, and social knowledge open new possibilities of excellence in them. A home is greater than a house, but a good home needs a good house. Changes in home living are inevitable. Standards of home living are needed to guide in readjustments to meet these changes. The standards themselves will need broadening as home living becomes richer. Better homes are waiting for all who assume their responsibility as members of their homes.

#### *Pupil Activities*

1. Debate: "Children should be seen but not heard."
2. Study the home life of any great man or woman. In what respects was that person a homemade product?

3. Try to prove that the home is not the best laboratory for human beings. What is your conclusion?

4. Compare the home life of any juvenile delinquent of whom you know with that of the great person whom you studied for Topic 2 of these activities. In which of the nine points on pp. 269-270 was the delinquent's home deficient? Add other points if you can.

5. In which of the nine points can a small child or an adolescent improve a home? In which can or should the father improve a home?

6. What is the difference between a home and a house? Why do realtors advise people to own their homes instead of advising them to own their houses?

7. Tell the story of Benjamin Franklin's visit to your home.

8. In what ways do better houses stimulate people to have better homes?

9. Make a survey of any home to which you have access, preferably your own. If you survey your own home, get all the help that you can from other home members.

10. Summarize the contributions that an excellent home can make to society.

11. Read Samuel Butler's novel, *The Way of All Flesh*, which is an attack on home life and the influence of the home. How just do you think Butler's criticisms are? Do any of his accusations apply to any homes with which you are familiar?

12. If you had written this chapter, what additional topics would you have included?

### *Further Reading*

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## CHAPTER XIII

### School Life

#### I. THE SCHOOL AS A MAIN CURRENT OF LIFE

LIFE, the most important thing in the world to us, is like "Ole Man Ribber"—it just keeps rolling along. Little streams rush into our lives and continue with the main current. These little streams disappear, but they are never lost. For life, moving on and on, is always affected by them.

School life, at its best, supplies many of the larger tributaries to the main current of life. It is a stream of experiences, guided especially to flow into the main current, strengthening, directing, and in every way making it more effective. All this would be as easy as it sounds if only we were not made as we are: Our main current does not always agree with the small streams that try to enter it. Sometimes the small streams seem to dry up before they reach what we call our real lives; sometimes they seem to run backward; and sometimes they just cannot mix. This is probably as it should be; otherwise we should be too monotonously alike.

To get the most from any experience, we need, first, to examine its effect upon ourselves. Second, we need to find out how the experience can be made more beneficial to us. If we begin this examination by looking at ourselves, we shall find one point about which all of us will agree:

We wish to do certain things better than we now do them. This has been true of all of us, year after year. By the time we were ten years old, we were told of many things that we should have done better, and if we had been "good" children, we could, no doubt, have profited more than we did by what we were told. The same is true of us now, whether we are sixteen, thirty, or sixty: Someone is always telling us how to do certain things better, and we are always thinking to ourselves, "Yes, but who wishes to do those things better?"

What, then, do we mean when we agree that all of us wish to do some things better? We mean this—we have our own selves, such as they are, and they seem to tell us that certain things are good for us and that others are not. We are willing to work at or to practice for years the desirable things, but we are thwarted, irritated, and bored by having someone else make us work at and practice the undesirable things. We like to play, for example, but as soon as we are fairly started at play, someone comes along and tells us to stop playing and do something "worth while." Sometimes it seems that the school exists for that very purpose—to tell us to end our play and to begin to work. Our main current could run smoothly and keep us happy, it seems, but another stream tries to enter and turn us toward a new and unwanted way.

As we live more years and find more things that we desire to do, we begin to appreciate the values of schooling. By the time we reach high school, we find that we can express ourselves with pleasure in some of the directions in which the school has trained us. We can express ourselves better in play, for instance, than we could have done if there had been no playing at school. We no longer fly into a rage like the babies we once were, even when

someone else seems to be treading upon us. We still have some of our childish feelings about such matters, but we have found that our earlier expression of such feelings did not help us to do what we wished to do. Moreover we can play better in co-operation with others. We no longer wish to have all the attention of onlookers, for we have found that the success of much of our play depends on everyone in the group or team and that we can enjoy play when we perform the part assigned to us, even if it is a minor one. The rules of a game are now a part of us, and we try to follow them and have other players do the same. All this we call good sportsmanship, and we pride ourselves upon it.

Somewhat to our surprise, possibly, we find that our school subjects, as has been shown in Chapter IV, help us to express ourselves as we wish to. Reading has become a skill that we use with pleasure, especially if we find the kind of books that we like. We live in such books, and judging from what has already happened to us, we may find ourselves, in a short time, enjoying readings that do not now interest us. Music and art have enabled us to find more satisfactions in life. For boys this may have been harder than for girls, because boys have had to outgrow the early fear of doing things which certain boorish persons told them were only for girls.

Still other subjects, such as mathematics, science, and history, have helped us to express ourselves more satisfactorily than unschooled children can. We are no longer puzzled by the "marvels" of the universe and by human institutions, for we understand many of these things. History tells us, for example, of times when the ablest men thought an eclipse of the moon was a sign of the wrath of gods, but science and mathematics have freed us from

such a belief and now we go about our affairs without fear of those gods or of an eclipse. Our own plans are often influenced by another gift of these subjects when we consult the weather man, for he is able to forecast what was only guessed at in the days of superstition. Science changes even our attitude toward other people, as when we learn from it that the color of one's hair has nothing to do, biologically, with one's disposition. And so on, for other subjects—*all subjects help us to express ourselves, and so all subjects help us to live.*

## 2. THE RELATION OF SCHOOL LIFE TO OTHER LIFE

The opening paragraphs of this chapter state that school life supplies large tributaries to the main current of life. Anyone can see that this is not always done effectively. Day after day may pass with the least possible connection between schooling and living. Of course the pupils are living, but what they regard as real life is found only outside the school. Pupils may be certain that this sad state of affairs annoys teachers as well as themselves.

What can be done to relieve this undesirable condition? Two things are necessary. First, pupils must see to it that in spite of all that may happen, they develop selves which they can respect more highly from year to year. Second, schools must see to it that in spite of all that may happen, they form a partnership with pupils to develop self-respecting pupils who are worthy of a self-respecting school. *Both pupils and teachers must unite to make school life a real part of all life.*

Every successful pupil sees at least three relationships between school life and other life. He sees (1) that before he began any schooling or any course in school, many

valuable experiences occurred; (2) that while he is attending school, valuable experiences continue outside of school; and (3) that after school days are over, his life will be affected by his school experiences. These three relationships of school life to other life will now be described.

(1) *Relationships of school life to earlier life.* Before any child entered the primary grades, he had many experiences which were later to help him in elementary school. He had language lessons at home from the time of his birth. Gradually he learned the meaning of gestures and words. Some children have as many as two thousand words upon which to build their vocabularies at their entrance to school. The first lessons in school are based upon this early vocabulary. Soon children find that objects have names, and also that these names have printed signs or symbols. Indeed many children make this discovery long before they enter school, and they learn the symbols well enough to read a few stories.

Our efforts in art and music had their beginnings before any of us can remember. At the tender age of one we were ready for simple pictures and well-accented rhythms in music. With a little encouragement we made designs with blocks at four, or at least we could have done so. By that age we may have used our crayons to improve the designs on our wallpaper at home. We were then, or could have been, good drummers, and we knew several little songs. The kindergarten and primary grades built upon these art foundations.

The first-grade pupil brings to school a little knowledge about many other things. He has already advanced far in physical education, for he has nearly worn out his

devoted parents by his energetic physical activity. He can run, jump, play ball a little, and he thinks he knows what is good to eat. In mathematics he knows the difference between half an apple and a whole apple—though he probably may think that his half of an apple should be larger than the half which he gives away. He knows that one lollipop costs less than two, and his arithmetic is often correct. He is likely to have grasped the beginnings of geography, natural science, and social living.

Just as the primary school builds upon preschool foundations, so each new course builds upon what has gone before that course. All successful schooling goes on in this way. Pupils as well as teachers are expected to find out how each year's schooling is related to what has gone before. They are not expected to learn something that seems to have no relation to their earlier living. When the relationship between earlier living and schooling is clear and significant, pupils grow in self-respect as they go on with their education.

(2) *Relationships of school life to out-of-school life.* The school is only one of many places in which learning occurs. Evenings and vacations, Saturdays and Sundays, all add to living in many of the ways that the school does. All the earlier activities just mentioned continue through school days. Sometimes these activities seem damaging rather than profitable. The language of playtime is not always like that of the school. It is said that pupils sometimes learn so much undesirable language out of school that the school, with its short day, cannot develop correct habits of speech. This depends on everyone involved in such learning: parents, playmates, teachers, and most of all, the pupils themselves. At any rate pupils may very well learn more

than one kind of English language, and the pupil who wishes to use socially acceptable English among different kinds of people needs to do so.

Among the other places for learning, the home probably stands first. There, more than elsewhere, are opportunities for studying social living under the most practical conditions. Our own families are worth knowing. From our families we get thorough training about how people live. This training is a constantly useful background for much schoolwork, and if we are to be successful in either home or school, we must use this background. Besides, much of what is discovered at school can be applied in these intimate associations; but as many of us have found, we must be prepared for tests harder than those given us by our teachers, if we are to "pass" among our families!

Churches, libraries, playgrounds, theaters, museums, open fields, city streets, and other places help pupils in their school life. Besides these there are the occupations of pupils during vacations and at other times. Girls prepare for physical science by working with numerous household devices. Boys sometimes do the same. Both girls and boys, by working or playing and by watching other persons at work or play, find out much that can enrich school life. No school subject is removed from everyday living for the pupil who, with the teacher as partner, connects this out-of-school learning with that of the school itself. *As the school contributes to other living, so other living can contribute to the school.*

(3) *Relationships of school life to later living.* What's the use of going to school? It is often said that what is learned in school is soon forgotten. When school life is a thing apart from real living, this is almost true, and the loss of the learning is not altogether undesirable. Even then, however,



relearning would be fairly easy if not necessarily profitable. It is said also that certain high school graduates make no use of their schooling if they enter occupations which do not require an educational background. This, like the remembering or forgetting of what has been learned, depends on the kind of schooling they have received. *Good schooling is profitable to anyone in any kind of vocational or avocational living.*

The interests and schooling of most persons have more influence upon later living than have any other conditions. The pupil can do much, therefore, while in school, toward helping to place himself where he wishes to be later. In certain cases this is obvious, as in the case of the pupil who plans definitely to be a physician and pursues the courses required for that profession. It is equally true, however, in other cases. The girl or boy who "lives" science in school is laying a foundation for scientific thinking which can last a lifetime. Habits of orderly reasoning will raise that pupil above the dismal valley of biased opinion and slipshod thinking that yawns like a trap for the ignorant. That pupil will use his school science in his later living and he will have an attitude that he and other people can respect.

The principal point in this section on the relationship of school life to other life before, during, and after schooling is this: *All living is learning, and learning is a life career.* The part which the school plays in your life career of learning is that of a counselor or director of learning in your present important period of life. It is similar to the part of a professional golf coach in the life of an amateur golfer. The coach makes the best use of the amateur's general equipment and tries to improve the amateur's score for life. But if the amateur plays no golf after the

coach's lessons, there will be little, if any, effect from the coaching. Furthermore if the amateur disregards the coach's suggestions in later playing, little value will come from the lessons.

To a great extent, therefore, the school is what the pupil makes it. The school can be one of the main tributaries of life if the pupil brings his real self into it and if he allows school life to become and remain a real part of his developing self for life. All this requires more than certain pupils are willing to give, and for such pupils, the school is not always worth while.

Every keen pupil can see that there is, however, another difficulty: To a great extent the school is what teachers and administrators make it. In many schools of the past and in too many of the present, this is a greater difficulty than that of having the pupil do his part. This is the reason for the earlier statement that *teachers as well as pupils must be partners in the pupils' learning*. The school must be organized especially for this partnership. The worst condition for learning is found when teachers and pupils regard themselves as enemies. The best condition exists when they pull together.

Pupils as well as teachers must know that the partnership depends on mutual relationships. Few teachers are unwilling to become partners, and pupils can ill afford to reject them as such. This little sermon seems necessary, for the point of it is that pupils cannot receive what they really want without doing their part. If your school encourages this partnership, it is significant in your living.



PARTNERS IN LIVING

## 3. CONDUCT AS THE BUSINESS OF SCHOOL LIFE

If you and your teachers are partners, you have only one real subject in school. That subject is *conduct*—what you and other people do. We know that you may disagree with this statement and say that you have many studies. In fact you may say that we are now denying all that we stated in Chapter IV. Still we insist that *conduct is your only real subject in school*.

We mean just this: *Schools have only one purpose, and this purpose is to help pupils to live successfully*. If you ever studied anything that did not help you to live successfully, you and your school were poor partners. If you are now studying anything that is not helping you to live successfully, you and your school are still poor partners. You need a different contract—one that you and your school can fulfill. Your partnership contract must be for one purpose only. Unless both you and your school agree that successful living is the only purpose of the contract, the partnership should be dissolved at once. For successful living, that is, effective conduct, is the real business of the school. This is the one thing that must bind together your life out of school with all your studies and activities in school. This is the reason why we have said so much about the part that school subjects can play in your living. The deep importance of this point makes it necessary for us to say still more about conduct as your only real school subject.

When you read stories of other people or observe the conduct of yourself and your friends, you probably wonder why human beings act as they do. Why did Tom and Maggie, in *The Mill on the Floss*, play happily one moment and quarrel the next? Why do you play when you should work or, possibly, work when you should play? Many

questions like these can be answered correctly; others cannot. To answer all such questions about any person, you would need a complete life-history of that person, and you would also need to be able to interpret the history. Such a history would include an account of everything the person had done, as well as complete knowledge of his body. To know all this about any person would require a study of his life from infancy, his home, community, library, and all other conditions that have influenced him. If the person is quarrelsome, you would try to find the reasons for his disposition. Such a person may have been teased, bullied, or otherwise mistreated; he may have had a weak body from infancy; or he may have bad habits of eating or sleeping. Knowledge about human conduct, like all sciences, must wait for discoverers to show the way to many answers that we need. The best that we can do now is to get as much insight into conduct as possible and find out how to use this insight effectively.

In getting true insight into conduct, you will rid yourself of misguiding prejudices—if you have any. For as you know, prejudices are false guides to conduct. Most persons have prejudices which affect their behavior. Some prejudices can be explained away, and true insight can then improve conduct. For example one prejudice comes from the common saying that red hair is a sign of a violent temper. True insight shows the false basis for this saying. We find that certain red-haired persons, like Queen Elizabeth, have had violent tempers and that such cases may have resulted in the familiar prejudice. We know also that red-haired persons are often treated as if they would like to start a fight. Such treatment would affect almost anyone's conduct. If, then, such a person is expected to be violent, urged to defend his complexion, and given a nick-

name to remind him of his "violence," he has a harder problem of conduct than his black-haired brother has. If children of all complexions were treated alike, life would become simpler for those who were formerly the target of prejudice. If all prejudices like this could be banished by schools, conduct would be improved.

You may know of other superstitions that can be explained away. Here are a few samples which you may explain away and banish: By staring at a person's back, you can make him turn and look at you; brains and beauty never go together; features show a person's morals. Every time that you banish a prejudice, you improve your chances for success.

All problems of conduct grow out of another human quality, one which was discussed in Chapter III; that is, that everyone is a bundle of energy. The question is, then, how to guide this energy into the most satisfactory channels. As you know from chemistry and physics, the student of human conduct is not the only scientist who studies energy. However he studies energy in a special way, in its relation to conduct. In this study he must draw also upon his knowledge of the best way of living.

What is the best way of living? Everyone can give some kind of answer to this question. Someone may say that we should live happily; others may say that we should so live that, at a later time, we can be happy. Still others tell us that we should live as human beings. This rule of conduct is as difficult to follow as any, for who can say how human beings should live?

When anyone says that we should live as human beings, he is likely to be ready to give us a long explanation, if we wait for it. Briefly the explanation runs thus: We arrived in the world with great possibilities. Having these

possibilities, we shall be wasters if we do not use them. Therefore since wasters are unfair to themselves and others, we must harness our energies and make the best use of them. This is our answer to the question about the best way of living.

You have noticed that conduct, as here discussed, includes all that a person does—thinking, talking, acting. Conduct is self-expression. Excellent conduct is just another name for successful human living. It is, therefore, everyone's main problem, and as stated above, it is the only problem of all schools. Everyone tries to get the greatest possible good from living, and schools exist only to aid in this. Consequently there should be no objection to going to school or to learning anywhere else. But there is.

The trouble that many pupils have with schools was mentioned earlier in this chapter—schools have tried for too long to improve conduct in unwanted ways. Pupils have often found themselves only pretending that they like their studies. Studies often seem to stifle self-expression and to make school life less and less interesting. Clearly this was the case in colonial days when pupils were forbidden even during play to speak except in a foreign language. In recent years, since many teachers have caught up with the human procession, such conditions have been disappearing. Pupils can, should, and do express themselves in modern schools. Only by doing so, can they be and become the persons they wish to be or should be.

Although the authors of this book realize that everyone is as likely as a rolling cannon ball to follow the path in which he has started, they insist that anyone will either stop or change his path if he finds a good enough reason to do so. They are convinced also that if anyone examines his conduct carefully, he will find such a reason. The next

thing, as far as schools are concerned, is to find teachers who can bring school subjects into the main stream of their pupils' lives. This plan seems to place the burden of improving conduct where it belongs—upon both pupils and teachers.

#### 4. SCHOOLS IMPROVE CONDUCT

The only purpose of schools is to help pupils to live as intelligently, as fully, and as successfully as possible. Whenever this purpose is achieved, schooling is one of the main currents of life. The school builds upon what the pupils have when they enter school, it ties the experiences that pupils have outside the school with those that they have in school, and it helps pupils to lay a foundation for a life career of successful living. The study of personal and social adjustment, as a main part of regular school life, can improve conduct whenever serious pupils and competent teachers form a partnership for the study of the problems of daily life.

#### *Pupil Activities*

1. Why are you in school? Here is a reported conversation between two English boys, Tom and Arthur, who attended Rugby about one hundred years ago. Compare your answer to this question with Tom's answer.

*Arthur:* "What were you sent to Rugby for?"

*Tom:* "Well, I don't know exactly—nobody ever told me. I suppose because all boys are sent to a public school in England."

*Arthur:* "But what do you think yourself? What do you want to do here and to carry away?"

(Tom thought a minute.)



*Tom:* "I want to be A 1 at cricket and football and all the other games, and to make my hands keep my head against any fellow, lout or gentleman. I want to get into the sixth before I leave, and to please the Doctor; and I want to carry away just as much Latin and Greek as will take me through Oxford respectably. There now, young 'un, I never thought of it before, but that's pretty much about my future. Ain't it all on the square? What have you got to say to that?"

*Arthur:* "Why, that you're pretty sure to do all that you want then."

*Tom:* "Well, I hope so. But you've forgot one thing that I want to leave behind me. I want to leave behind me (Tom spoke slowly and looked much moved) the name of a fellow who never bullied a little boy, or turned his back on a big one." (*School Days at Rugby.*)

2. In what ways did Tom's school life flow into the main current of his life? In what ways did it not do so?

3. Examine your favorite school study to find the ways in which it has helped you. Has it given you valuable knowledge? Has it changed your attitude desirably? Examine your least-liked study in the same way. What is your honest opinion about the difference between these studies as far as you are concerned?

4. Look through the Table of Contents of this book to see if you can find a topic that you had never thought about before you entered high school. Next make a list of the unfamiliar words contained in Chapter XIII and find out their meanings.

5. How has your understanding of this chapter been helped (1) by what you had done before you began this course, (2) by what has happened recently in school, and (3) by what has happened recently out of school?

6. What evidence can you produce to show that the topics of this book will be important for you after you finish school?

7. What effect has "school partnership" upon the results that you are getting in this course or in other courses?

8. Are people born grouchy or happy or superstitious or do they learn these characteristics? You may answer *Yes*, *No*, or *I don't know*. What evidence have you for each of these answers? Possibly you prefer to leave this as an "open" question. If so, why?

9. What is your present definition of conduct? Make a note of it, and later, see if you wish to modify it.

10. What is meant by saying that schooling is "a foundation for a life career of successful living"?

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## CHAPTER XIV

# Social Institutions and Yourself

### I. WHAT IS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION?

UNSEEN, as important as air, more universal than food, and you are a part of it—what is it? There may be several right answers to this riddle, but for our purposes the correct response is a social institution. And in turn, the term *social institution* itself is a riddle.

To illustrate this riddle we may use your daily activities. When you started for school this morning, you left one institution—your home—to enter another—your school. Each of these institutions has people and buildings that are used according to the purposes and activities, respectively, of homes and schools. If you spent any money on the way to school, you used another institution. For money is a social institution that brings people together and influences them. If you spoke to anyone before you reached your school, you were affected by a fourth institution. For our language is an institution that enables us to act together. If you walked along a business street this morning, you passed several institutions—a bank, a store, a theater, and so on down the street. Many other organizations, such as clubs, churches, scout groups, governments, labor unions, national and international commercial companies, are included in the long list of social institutions. Football and baseball are often called institutions.

These illustrations show that social institutions are not simply collections of people. If people organize for certain purposes and activities, they may call themselves members of a social institution. Or if people develop something like money or language to be used in an organized way, they may call this an institution. An institution is something that people produce—not the people themselves. Briefly, then, *a social institution is a means by which people act together for purposes which they set as goals.* It may require a building, as a church does; it may require an open area of ground, as a football field does; it may require symbols, as language or money do; or it may require ships, as the navy does.

The most important point about social institutions is that they help us to act together to achieve something that seems desirable. When we act together we are interdependent; that is, we depend on one another. And so social institutions provide training in the attitudes and activities of co-operative living. All institutions are like homes in this respect, although some enable us to extend ourselves into activities which the home cannot provide.

## 2. EACH SOCIAL INSTITUTION DEPENDS ON OTHERS

No social institution exists by itself; each one is related to all others. The “higher” the civilization of a people, the more complex this relation becomes. The complexity of some such relationships can be illustrated by a fairly recent institution—the radio.

(1) *How the radio depends on other institutions.* When the invention of wireless telegraphy was first announced in the home of one of the authors of this book, a guest happened to be present. “Pooh,” he said, “that’s the greatest humbug of the age.” The eldest member of the family

doubted, but the youngest member was violently confident, for his current-events class at school had already decided that Marconi's discovery was authentic. But widespread use of the radio was still for the future—it was not yet a social institution.

Sixteen years later the radio was used by governments in the World War, but still it was only a plaything as far as homes were concerned.

In about 1920 high school boys and girls began their campaign for radios in their own homes. Still the radio seemed to be only a fad that would last a few months and then be taken to the attic or the dump heap. But before many years, loud-speakers were developed for the radio, and important news items, such as election returns, were flashed over the air. Businessmen also became interested in the manufacture and sale of radios. And so the radio as an institution made its appearance in America, but its entrance depended on other social institutions, such as science, the home, the school, governments, news service, and commerce.

The present-day relationship of the radio to other institutions can be seen by glancing through the programs for any week. One day's program, for example, recently gave a place to commercial institutions, Jewish New Year music and speaking, football, news, symphonic music, drama, home life, government, agriculture, and numerous other institutional features, all of which can reach about two thirds of our population in their homes. With a sum total of four hours of news reports that day, the radio seems to have taken its place alongside the newspaper as a means for informing the public about daily affairs. Furthermore an average day's broadcasts include the programs of foreign stations from Iceland to Java. This brief sketch shows the

early dependence of the radio on science at a time when wireless communication was scoffed at, its dependence later on governments, its acceptance still later by the home, then the demand for it by the combined forces of many institutions, and finally its world-wide acceptance as a social institution to promote entertainment and information.

Another kind of institutional relationship can be illustrated by the radio. Since the radio would be useless if no one listened to it and since the programs would be worse than useless if they were bad for listeners, care is taken to offer programs that are both interesting and good. Radio stations have encouraged their listeners to help them decide whether or not programs are interesting and good, and they have paid investigators to find out what listeners want to hear. Parent-teacher and child-study associations have recommended certain programs and driven undesirable features off the air. Sponsors have improved their programs as a result of the study of the effects of radio advertising. Scholars and statesmen have developed strong societies to study and better the programs. This co-operation among different groups has resulted in finer broadcasts and has increased the services of radio to society.

Interrelationships among social institutions are further illustrated by the sponsorship of radio programs. When we listen to a radio concert, we may be hearing an advertisement for almost any commercial product that is made in America. Such programs could not be broadcast if commercial institutions refused to pay for them and charge the cost to advertising. The business firm is baiting us to get our attention and good will. The more attractive its bait, the greater the firm's sales are expected to be. At

the same time the good will of listeners for the radio station is developed.

Additional good will comes to a radio station when its manager permits addresses to be given for the general welfare. Speakers to deliver such addresses are often sponsored by large organizations. Radio managers also seem to have become convinced that they owe such service to the public. In some cases they themselves have paid noted speakers to give addresses. Their stations are enabled in this way to broadcast a reasonable number of educational programs and also to gain the good will of citizens who wish to hear addresses on public affairs. In this manner the radio often becomes closely related to our national government.

(2) *Dependence on the Bill of Rights.* The relationships of the government to other social institutions are far deeper and greater than its relationships to the radio. For example every American institution has its Bill of Rights to exist from the national government (Amendments I-X to the Constitution). Most citizens are so accustomed to our national conditions that they take them for granted and overlook the fact that their very existence depends upon their relationship to our particular type of government. Let us mention a few cases. As far as the government is concerned we may rise at any time we please on Sunday morning and go to any church we choose or to no church at all. This we could not do under many other governments. We can read newspapers that criticize the government severely. This could not be done in the large group of countries that prevent even the publication of such newspapers. Our rights to free speech and free assembly also depend upon governmental relationships. Many European peoples do not possess these rights.



Institutions as well as individuals are protected by our Constitution and Bill of Rights. Our money, for example, is regulated under Article I, Section 8, in which Congress is given power to "coin money" and "regulate the value thereof," and to "provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States." Another institution, commerce, is cared for under the same section, where Congress is given power to "regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states," and to "define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas." Particularly in the Preamble is our protection guaranteed by general principles stating the true reasons for the existence of such an institution as the United States. There we are told that this nation exists to form a better government than had existed before, to "establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

The American design for national living has protected and enlarged the life of both citizens and institutions. Strangely enough the chief difficulties that our nation has faced have come from misuses of this freedom and protection. For some of our citizens have failed to develop responsibility to "promote general welfare," their interest being in promoting what they thought was their own welfare. When these individuals, who are undeveloped socially, acquire great wealth or fill high offices, as some do, they violate the Constitution in both spirit and letter. But as George Washington said to the state governors in 1783, the United States came into existence in days of intelligent liberty, "and, if their citizens should not be

completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own."

Here is a straightforward statement of our responsibility. If it expresses only an ideal, it is still of great value, for the ideal is high. It places on every citizen the responsibility for finding out what the national welfare requires and for designing his own life and the social institutions he controls to promote this welfare. If any person or any institution fails to follow this design for living, our full national purpose will fail.

(3) *You live in many social institutions.* Since you have many related interests, you will need many institutions to represent and promote these interests. And furthermore these institutions will have to be related to one another.

You live with other people who have their own interests. Some of these interests are interdependent; that is, they depend on one another, as, say, interests in manufacturing and transportation do. Although the interests of manufacturers and transporters are interdependent, they do not completely agree. Though the factory may need to ship its products by rail, and the railway may gain its revenue by hauling freight, yet there may be conflict about the cost of this service.

A glance at one of the problems of persons engaged in manufacturing and transportation will show how their interests are connected intricately with the interests of other people. Notice, in the first place, that there are two groups of people in each of these two institutions—the owners and the employees. It can be shown by the manufacturer that his employees' wages must be cut if the cost of hauling is high, while the railway official can show that his employees' wages must be cut if the cost of hauling

is low. Here are four sets of interests. Manufacturers and transporters may agree on high profits for themselves and low wages for their employees, or the employees may unite and obtain high wages and reduce their companies' profits.

At this point other sets of interests enter. If either the owners or the employees force their institutions into a deadlock, business may cease and the public be deprived of useful manufactured articles. Next the public may form a consumers' organization to appeal to the government for a settlement of the differences and a renewal of business. This governmental control may be regarded by employers as undesirable interference; if so, a new conflict between institutions will arise. During all these conflicts each institution involved tries to show, sometimes by misrepresentation, that its conduct has been just; and every concession that is granted will come with a protest. And so different institutions go on from year to year, trying always to balance interests that agree with interests that conflict.

The purpose of our having social institutions is to promote human welfare. To get the greatest benefit from institutions, the many interests served by them must be balanced; interests that agree must balance those that conflict. Such a balancing of interests requires that people be generous, for they must give as well as take. Otherwise an institution fails to become socialized in its relationship to other institutions; it then stands forth as a tyrant or bully, endangering the public good. If American institutions are to follow the plan of George Washington, they must be socialized by the citizens who control them. Institutions depend on you as much as you depend on them.

### 3. CHOOSING AND ORGANIZING YOUR SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

This section will deal with social institutions of which you are or may be a member, such as a dramatic club, a dancing club, an orchestra or band, an art club, a football team, and so on. Much of what is said here may pertain to out-of-school institutions, but this discussion applies especially to school organizations.

(1) *How to choose an organization.* Your choice of the organizations to which you will belong depends on two points: first your own purposes in life, and second, the purposes fulfilled by the institutions. You may be in doubt about both these points. If so, exploration of yourself and of the institutions is needed. Chapter XI gave you a plan for a general inventory of yourself. Two additional sets of questions, one set about any organization that you may be considering and one set about yourself with respect to the organization, are given here.

#### a. *Questions about the organization*

1. What are the main purposes of the organization?
2. What are the main activities of the organization?
3. Where do these activities lead?
4. What relationship has the organization to other organizations, people, or things?
5. Are the activities worth while? If so, for which kinds of reasons—fun, social development, health, personal development, education, vocation?

#### b. *Questions about yourself*

1. Do I want to join the organization? If so, why?
2. Do I need the organization? If so, why?
3. Am I fitted for or can I adapt myself to the organization?

4. Will the organization enable me to meet the people whom I wish to meet?
5. Will I enjoy the organization, its activities, its members?
6. Will I be interested or only amused by the activities of the organization?
7. Will I be interested permanently or only for a short time in the organization and its activities?
8. Can I have a well-balanced activity program if I join the organization?
9. Will I have time to be active in the organization?
10. If I join this organization, will I need to drop another activity that I value?

(2) *Every institution has a design for living.* For you and also for everyone else, an institution's design may be bad—in which case joining it would be a bad choice; or the design may be good—in which case joining it would be a good choice if you can find a place for the organization among your other activities.

Your choice of social organizations may be influenced by the opinions high school graduates have of the activities that they engaged in while they were in high school. Such opinions may help you to answer some of the questions that have just been asked. Out of fifty-two extracurricular activities offered from 1927 to 1932 in the high school of Creston, Iowa, recent graduates placed the following activities at the *top of the list* for usefulness:<sup>1</sup>

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Business and commerce  | School paper    |
| Musical organizations  | Dramatics       |
| National Honor Society | Student council |
| Manual training club   | Track           |

<sup>1</sup> Cory, Byron B., "High School Graduates Appraise Extra-Curriculum Activities," (*School Review*, Vol. XLIII, No. 9, November, 1935, pp. 672-682).

The permanent value of an activity depends, of course, on the way it is conducted and on the person who engages in it. Other graduates, therefore, may look back more favorably on other activities, but most people will be surprised, probably, to see some of the following activities at the *bottom of the list*:

|          |            |          |
|----------|------------|----------|
| Football | Boxing     | Camera   |
| Pep club | Checkers   | Airplane |
| Hi-Y     | Volleyball | Travel   |

Before taking the opinions of the graduates of another school too seriously, you may want to find out what the graduates of your own school think of their school activities—for special conditions in your school and locality may make an activity successful even if it is unsuccessful elsewhere. Besides, there are scores of other activities that might be desirable. The Creston graduates named the following new activities as desirable; they are listed here in the order of frequency of mention:

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Swimming              | Astronomy       |
| Cards                 | Mythology       |
| Various games         | Communication   |
| Skating               | Garden study    |
| Current affairs       | Wrestling       |
| Curio club            | Bowling         |
| Health club           | Archery         |
| Antiques              | Rifle club      |
| Folk songs and dances | Riding          |
| Art                   | Reasoning       |
| Ballroom dancing      | Play production |
| Avocations            | Etiquette       |
| Salesmanship          | Sociology       |

Public speaking  
Political science  
Use of leisure  
Nature study

Military training  
Geology  
Engineering  
Agriculture

If favorable answers about any of these activities can be given to the questions on pp. 312-313, that is, if they fit your design for living, you can test your executive ability by attempting to start a new social organization in your school.

(3) *How to plan an organization.* If you and your friends desire a new activity, you can plan it by yourselves, but it will probably be more effective if it is planned with reference to the other organizations of your school and community. Some high schools have student senates that help pupils who wish to form a new club. Before a new club is chartered, it must be approved by this senate.<sup>1</sup> According to this plan, a pupil or a group of pupils can propose a new activity for the school to any teacher or to the principal—or the activity can be proposed first by a teacher. The next steps are: (1) Hold a meeting, (2) elect temporary officers, (3) outline the purposes and working rules of the proposed club, and (4) seek a faculty sponsor or adviser. If the pupils then wish to complete the development of the club, they fill in the following application:

### APPLICATION FOR CLUB CHARTER

(Uniontown Senior High School)

We, the representatives of the ..... Club,  
respectfully petition the Student Senate to grant us a charter.

The main purposes and aims of our club are.....

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. A. Lubold developed this kind of plan for the Senior High School of Uniontown, Pennsylvania (*Junior-Senior High School Clearing House*, Volume IV, No. 5, January, 1930, pp. 308-311).

.....  
.....  
.....

The values to be derived by its members will be.....

.....  
.....

The benefits derived from this club by the school probably  
will be.....

.....  
.....

This club would like to meet (Where) .....

(When).....(How often).....

This club plans, does not plan, to have a constitution. (Cross  
out proper word or words.)

This club will have the following officers and standing com-  
mittees:

,.....  
.....  
.....

The following are the proposed activities and working plans  
of the club:.....



.....

.....

The membership requirements of this club will be .....

.....

.....

The members will be chosen or elected by .....

.....

It is requested that ..... be sponsor of this club because .....

This club intends, does not intend, to charge an entrance fee of..... (Cross out proper word or words.)

It intends, does not intend, to charge dues of .....

The money collected will be used for .....

.....

.....

Temporary Sponsor

.....

Temporary President

Date.....

.....

Temporary Secretary

Next the Student Senate examines the application. If the application is approved by the Senate, the following form is issued as a charter to the new club:

## SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Uniontown, Pennsylvania

## CLUB CHARTER

## The Student Senate

Pursuant to the authority vested in us by the principal and the Student Senate, this charter is hereby issued to.....

This charter is issued to be effective for the year indicated hereon and may be renewed by application to the Student Senate.

This charter is held subject to all the regulations and rules laid down by the Student Senate and the director of extracurricular activities concerning the conduct of school clubs and is revocable for violation of any or all of the same.

The activities of this club must be conducted along the lines stated in this application for a club charter and those lines only.

The sponsor of this club is.....

Year.....

The Student Senate

.....  
President

.....  
Secretary

.....  
Director of Extracurricular Activities

Date.....

After a club has been organized there must be careful planning of activities, definite time and place of meetings, choice of leaders who will carry on each activity, and division of responsibility. The history of clubs shows also that

the members should find a way to put a club to death speedily if its purposes have not been fulfilled or if it exists only for the sake of the officers. There are too many interesting and useful things to do in life for you to try, month after month, to prolong the life of a lost cause. It is the purposes of the club that supply the motives and the reasons for its organization, and no amount of talk about a club's constitution or its traditions will make a good club out of one that has lost the important purpose that it may have had when organized. But a good purpose may be so hidden by the rather needless "business meetings" of a club that most of the members become dissatisfied and inactive. For example if a club is organized to collect and exhibit curios, it must allow as little time as possible for the process of organization and the formalities of meetings. The main thing in this club is a curio. The leaders of a club must give first place to the thing for which the club exists.

#### 4. EFFECTS OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS ON THEIR MEMBERS

Since every social institution has a design for living, it must inescapably have an effect on the personalities of its members. Institutions bring together the devices of civilization. Action within the institution teaches these devices. This point was illustrated and emphasized for the home in Chapter XII and for the school in Chapter XIII. To a great extent we are as good as our institutions, and our institutions are as good as we are.

The social development of a person takes place through contact with other people. Though we can imagine many things, there is one thing that no one can imagine: How would a person feel if he had been entirely alone from the

moment of his birth? Even if a miracle happened so that the person could live, this case would present a problem that is harder than anything in mathematics. And the reason that such a person cannot be imagined is simply that no one can exist alone. On the other hand, in social development through contact with other people, the individual must take care not to lose his individuality.

Although Chapter XVI will give a fuller discussion of personality, we must ask now: What effects do our institutions have on our personalities? How and why does personality develop? An answer to the second of these questions has been suggested in the discussion of the physical basis of human life (Chapter III), where man was shown to be more than a machine. As long as a person lives, he does something; and one of the things that he cannot help doing is responding to other people. Whenever he does this, he changes himself. This is how and why he develops a personality.

We are now ready for a brief discussion of the effects of institutions on personality. These are some of the chief effects:

First, *on conversation*—A small club or a group of friends provides opportunities for conversation. We have a physical apparatus for speech, one for hearing, and a still more complicated one for understanding. Through experience, our understanding increases. The experience that comes from conversation teaches us a great deal about talking too much or too freely or in bad social taste. In this effect of conversation on personality as well as in many other matters, people need a balance between conflict and agreement. Conflict makes one consider one's opinions carefully, but when conflict is too strong, it leads either to open rebellion by the individual or to stifling. Agreement

OUR  
PURPOSE

Social Contact  
Conversation  
Organization  
Acquaintanceship  
Sportsmanship  
Co-operation  
Leadership  
Fitting in with  
Others



SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS: MAKING OUR CONTRIBUTIONS

makes one satisfied, but when agreement is too easy, it leads to gigantic egotism and stunted socialization.

Second, *on fitting in with others*—It is often said that “one never feels so little like a man as after going among men.” Other people help a person to see himself as he really is, and organizations are especially valuable for this purpose. Organizations give us an opportunity to try ourselves among other people.

Third, *on our getting acquainted with ourselves*—Group activities help a person to diagnose himself and stimulate him to remedy his shortcomings.

Fourth, *on working with others*—Much of a person’s time is spent with other people. If he is annoyed or distracted by them, he cannot take his rightful part in life. Institutions help teach him to adapt himself to other people and to work in co-operation with them.

Fifth, *on leadership*—The ablest leader is one who has learned how to adapt himself to other people. He is often a person who appears humble among his fellows, for he has learned from people that he cannot lead unless he has followers. Organizations give practice in leadership and in co-operation with leaders.

Sixth, *on social responsibility*—“Invisible dues” must be paid by every good member of a social organization. These “dues” are paid whenever he contributes ideas. And the contribution of ideas, in turn, stimulates his own development. Most of the persons on whom we can depend are good members of good organizations. To be a member of a group means to be responsible.

Seventh, *on general social ability*—Every person is equipped with means for developing his social nature, but no one is socialized at birth. Only by being social can he develop himself socially.

Eighth, *on self-control*—Outbursts of temper, extreme shyness, and other maladjustments reduce one's ability to like an organization or to be liked by its members. Such difficulties usually disappear in a good social climate where people can grow up emotionally as well as physically.

One may belong to an organization and work for it or against it or not work at all. Of course the effects will be different in each case. The best plan is to select an organization with a desirable design for living and to work for it. If it is a good organization, it has good social patterns in action and the adoption of these patterns will ennoble all its members. A person's relation to an institution works its influence upon him in a sure and lasting way.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. What are the differences between a collection of people and a social institution?
2. What social institutions have you encountered or used in the last two hours?
3. What modern social institutions were unknown when the first census of America was taken? To what other social institutions does each of these modern institutions owe its existence?
4. Compare the history of the radio with that of any other recent development, such as the automobile motion picture, or airplane.
5. Appraise a modern social institution with reference to its influence on social life.
6. Make a list of the social institutions that are named or implied in our Bill of Rights.
7. Imagine that you are talking to Wu Fang, an educated youth of Shanghai, and that he has just asked you to describe the American design for national living. Proceed with the conversation.

8. If you think that your school or community needs a new social organization, present your plan to your class. If no new organization is needed, examine one of your existing organizations with reference to the points in the section on choosing and organizing a social institution.

9. In what ways does active membership in a social institution seem to affect a person's egotism and socialization? Use any one organization as an illustration.

10. How do a member's activity and intelligence affect an institution to which he belongs? Use any active member of an organization as an illustration.

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## CHAPTER XV

### Morals and Manners

#### I. MORALS AND MANNERS DEPEND ON TIMES AND PLACES

AN ANCIENT saying counsels the traveler: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." If this counsel were to be followed, the poor traveler would need the constant guidance of an Emily Post. For morals as well as manners vary in different times and places—to the utter confusion of any traveler who tries to conform with the standards of ethics and etiquette of each country he visits. Our discussion shall, therefore, begin with three samples of correct conduct that are in contrast with our own.

In the distant Caucasus three courses are open to the man who falls in love. He may send an older person to the girl's father to argue his case for him and pay her price. If he is poor he may go on a thieving expedition and acquire enough money to gain respectability; then he may proceed as in the first case. Or he can kidnap the girl and obtain the protection of a foreign prince. All three courses are considered moral in the Caucasus. The last course of highhanded elopement is considered moral even if the girl has shown no signs of love.<sup>1</sup>

In the frigid Arctic regions a woman was traveling with her son and his family. She was old and infirm. The jour-

<sup>1</sup> Essad-Bey, *Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus*, Chapter VIII.

ney over ice and snow was hard and perilous. At length she entreated her son to erect an ice hut and leave her in it to die. This he did, and his act was considered moral in his land.<sup>1</sup>

In frontier Nebraska a youth called Slip stood at the bar of a crowded saloon in Valentine. He gulped a glass of whisky and then, with his hand on his cartridge belt, boasted that he feared no "viges" (vigilantes). A shot rang out and Slip fell to the floor. After his remains had been thrown outside, business went on as usual. Old Jules, who witnessed this affair, was a newcomer from Switzerland, but he saw that this was accepted as a moral act in the New World.<sup>2</sup>

Let us now turn to the manners of peoples whose social institutions differ from our own. Among nearly all primitive tribes adolescent boys are initiated into "manhood"; that is, they are taught the tribal secrets and customs so that they can thereafter live in the men's quarters. At the close of one of these initiations, an old tutor revealed to his ward the proper manners for courtship. "You no like girls first," the boy was told. "If you do, girl laugh at you do, girl laugh at you and call you a woman." Then the boy was given some "love medicine" and rubbed with coconut oil, about which the old man remarked, "Plenty girls like him."

Many countries, including our own, have what may be called threshold manners. These manners vary from removing the hat to taking off the shoes. Marco Polo told of one locality in which the well-mannered guest dared not touch the threshold as he entered to make a call. So important was this point of etiquette that strong guards were

<sup>1</sup> Freuchen, Peter, *Eskimo*.

<sup>2</sup> Sandoz, Mari, *Old Jules*, p. 8.

placed on either side of the door with staves to punish offenders. Should a caller be so ill-mannered as to touch the threshold, the guards would seize one of his garments and the guest would have to redeem it for money. This cordiality was omitted as the guest departed, because refreshments served during the call often made him unable to remember the refinements of polite society.

Highway manners in transition can be seen in some of the cities of China. Until recently pedestrians had greater rights than drivers, and were allowed to block the way even of busses. This condition led to many traffic jams.

To put an end to it, the local dictator [of the city of Yünnanfu] issued a proclamation, warning that anyone who got in the way of the bus, and was knocked down, would be liable to heavy fine and imprisonment. Things went along smoothly for several weeks after that. But one day a young driver came bouncing along, tooting full blast at a gray-haired pedestrian, who strode slowly down the middle of the street. Everyone else had scattered. The driver didn't slacken his speed; the crime was to be struck by, not to strike with, the bus. *He* should slow down! He carefully ran over the old gentleman and proceeded on his journey.

Unfortunately the victim happened to be an uncle of a Yünnan general, who promptly seized the proprietors of the bus company, and had them shot. The vehicles were confiscated by the military headquarters.

Thus Yünnanfu solved its hit-and-run driver problem in incipience. Life on the streets returned to its chaotic norm.<sup>1</sup>

Beneath each of the customs just described, there lies a reason based on the conditions of the people. Extreme interference by parents might appear to underlie the

<sup>1</sup> *Travel*, November, 1935, p. 13.

custom of highhanded elopement. But actually, beneath this custom is the parents' need for a son-in-law with a bag of gold. In the Arctic region every nonproducer is a superfluous citizen. On the frontier law courts were unable or unwilling to yield justice. Tribal etiquette restrains the initiated youth from enjoying sentimental affairs when foraging is in order. Guards at the threshold block the way of the uninvited or dangerous guest and preserve the dignity of the household. The Chinese city too hastily became progressive and was forced later to recognize the tradition of a slowly moving people.

## 2. THE MORAL QUESTION AS A SOCIAL QUESTION

The moral question has been called a social question. If this is true a moral citizen is a good citizen. In that case a person's morals must be judged according to the society in which he lives. The same conduct may be considered moral in one nation and immoral in another. Society and not the individual must, therefore, be said to make one's morals. Every sin is then a sin against society. Our question is this: Does a man make his own morals or does society make them for him?

This question takes us back to our earlier discussions. In Chapter XIV we found that social institutions are organized to help people act together to achieve a purpose that they think desirable. A worthy member of a social institution is a person who adopts the purpose of that institution and works toward its achievement. When a person joins a church, a debating club, or a football team, he adopts the purpose of that organization as his own and acts in accordance with it. When he becomes a member of a school, a community, or a nation, he again adopts the

purpose of the organization. Is he then behaving morally? With reference to the organization, obviously, he is.

Again, in the preceding chapter we found that a person never develops alone. A person and his society should balance each other. A person and his society are woven together so that he cannot separate them. His body tells him when he is hungry and his society tells him how to get food. If he lives in an uncivilized part of the world where food is scarce, he and his friends may plunder a neighboring tribe; but if he lives in the United States, he is forbidden to plunder Canada. Social standards in these cases have been woven into people's make-ups in different ways so that their morals are different in the two places. The United States affects a person's morals if he lives in that country; he must adjust to the conditions of his nation. In this case society makes his morals when it says, "Thou shalt not steal." In all his living society seems to design his conduct.

Now we may ask whether a person who had adopted the morals of America would continue to be moral if he should join a plundering tribe. Obviously we should call him immoral if he did so, for he would then be deliberately trying to evade the higher standards of his earlier society. We should say that he knew better than to plunder and that he was lowering his morals by conducting himself according to the customs of the tribe. The principle that underlies such a situation is this: *One cannot avoid moral responsibility by joining an organization that permits one to take what is known to be an unfair advantage of other people.*

Another question about morals is this: Can a person discard the moral principles of his social group when he is alone, and still be moral? Can he be far enough away from all society so that he is entirely alone and without

any responsibility to anyone else? In such a situation he could, perhaps, *plan* a burglary, but of course he could not carry it out without contact with other people or their goods and their laws. We should insist, nevertheless, that even the planning would be immoral, because the person would lower himself socially by thinking seriously of burglary. Likewise in all other possible cases, one cannot be moral while planning any act that would injure society or lower oneself in society.

While away from all other people, a man might abuse a dumb animal. But this would be immoral, both because needless infliction of pain is bad and because his society has regulations about the treatment of animals. Even if no one should discover this act, it would still be an offense that would degrade him when he again went among other people.

When alone, this person might abuse his own body—let us say by gluttony. Such conduct, however, would impair his body temporarily so that he would not be as good a person as society asks him to be. It would be immoral, therefore, because it would debase him physically and mentally.

We can think of no case in which a person can remove himself entirely from society and thus become totally irresponsible for the rules of morality. A person seems unable to divorce himself from all other people. If this is so, then one is bound morally, whether or not one is in the presence of other human beings. Of course this conclusion is necessary if our earlier discussion is true in which we said that a person and his society are inseparable. The extreme situation would be that in which a person might go to a desert island for life. Even there he would be responsible to his fellows for two reasons: First, if he were of any pos-

sible value to society, his fellows would not tolerate such living suicide; and second, if, by chance, he should return to society, he would be a baser person than before in proportion to the extent of his offenses against society's rules. Our final conclusion about the morals of a person in solitude is that *no one can escape society's morality by escaping from society.*

Another reason why a person cannot be immoral without injuring someone else is that *moral living consists of doing, or thinking about doing, something.* As long as a person does not sit motionless and thoughtless in space, as long as he does anything at all, he must be either moral or immoral. And since no matter what a person does will affect himself in some way or other as a member of society, all his conduct is, in a sense, social—by affecting him, it will eventually affect someone else. *Every act is, therefore, moral or immoral, as it affects other persons desirably or undesirably.*

At this point we find another difficulty about morality and social life. We may ask how a person can be moral and still interfere with another person's mode of living. Gangsters, to take an extreme example, have their codes of living. Their success and happiness depend on their being unmolested. Their wives and children will suffer if arrests occur. Why should we be harsh with them? The answer is that they are breaking the rules of social life; they are interfering with other people and upsetting the balanced conduct that is necessary for successful social living. If two gangsters clash, they cannot go to court for a just settlement, for they are already lawless and immoral. They set up a court of their own and shoot it out until their differences are settled. But if a respectable citizen clashes with a gangster, the law—in this case, morality also—supports the good citizen. If two moral persons clash,



their morality requires them to settle their differences according to social rules that seem best for themselves and other people. We have a right and a duty to interfere with other people's conduct when their conduct is contrary to society's rules. Sometimes the rules have to be revised, as in the case of the bus driver in China. But the new rules are believed to be good for society in general. Before we interfere with other people's conduct, we must have reasons for thinking that their conduct is bad for society. In such cases, as in those mentioned earlier, we judge morals by their social effects.

Morals depend on general welfare. We need to know, therefore, what our welfare is before we can intelligently consider morals. If our welfare changes, our morals must change, too. This statement has led to the belief that since many conditions have changed in the last century, our morality should change to fit the new conditions.

How shallow the changes in real welfare are can be seen if we use history as a guide in making a judgment about this question. In ancient Greece human welfare meant opportunity for successful living, just as it does now. The chief difference between welfare then and now is that about one sixth of the Greeks thought that only their personal welfare was important. The welfare of others did not matter to the upper, ruling group. They made rules to fit their notion of what was right. Now everyone's welfare is considered important. Therefore our rules—customs and morals—have changed. But the change is only on the surface. Human welfare called for our rules in ancient times as loudly as it calls for them today. And even at that time a few great moral leaders, such as Confucius in China, heard the call and set up rules to meet the need.

We now believe that morality includes *the greatest good to the greatest number of people*. This is an advance beyond the social thinking of the ancient Greeks. But we must go still further: We must examine what we mean by "the greatest good."

Sometimes we hear men say that modern home conditions are bad for women, because many women are freed from much of the toil that was necessary in earlier days. These men say that when women had long hours of work, they were better than they are now when they waste much time in idleness or in unprofitable activities. If, however, we examine what we mean by "the greatest good" for women, we will find that the men referred to above are criticizing modern conditions not so much because women are freed from routine, as because women, when freed, waste their time. If women were to spend their time, as many do, in profitable ways, the "good" might be greater than it was when they spent all their time doing things that are now done by machines.

Other critics assert that education should be free only to wealthy and brilliant pupils. They say that public money is wasted when high schools are provided for everyone. To this criticism we can reply that education is a guide to living and that everyone needs such a guide. The fault is not in the principle of universal education. The trouble is that some schools provide poor training or that some pupils fail to study. In this case "the greatest good" comes only when schools are well equipped and when pupils do their part well. Other cases are similar: It would be "good" for everyone to have money, only if he used it wisely; it would be "good" for everyone to read, if he read for profit as well as for pleasure. We agree, then, that the greatest good for the greatest number is desirable,

but we insist that we must examine carefully what is meant by the greatest good.

As soon as we arrive at this point in our reasoning about morality as a social question, we find that we must study the values of our conduct. To study values we need all the intelligence that we possess. We must try to find out not only whether or not certain conduct is good but also whether or not other conduct is better. If better conduct values can be found in this way, we shall have progressive morality, which is discussed in the following section.

### 3. PROGRESSIVE MORALITY

Morals have usually developed from habits. Ways of doing things are found successful and are continued until they become habits for individuals; later they may become customs for a whole people. By selecting acts that seem to produce desirable values and by adopting these acts as correct, all peoples have developed rules of conduct. From these rules have come the moral codes of every land.

These moral codes often represent the best rules for conduct that people could develop at the time. They are considered correct and everyone is required to follow them. The breaking of these rules usually has as bad an effect upon a nation as a foul has in a football game. Still there may be defects in the moral code of either a person or a nation. Two reasons for such defects are: first, that the person who made a rule may have done so accidentally or without understanding the situation; and second, that conditions may have changed so that a rule is out-dated. In either of these cases further progress should be made by reviewing the situation in question.

Progress in morality means greater good to a greater

number of people. Such progress is possible for individuals and for social institutions. It is made in four ways: (1) better understanding among people; (2) better judgment about values; (3) better judgment of right and wrong in specific cases; and (4) closer union of right thinking and right acting. Changes in these four directions will be discussed as aspects of progressive morality.

(1) *Progressive morality comes from better understanding among people.* If a man whom his own community calls a "good" citizen should try to slay all strangers at sight, something is wrong not only with the man's moral code but also with that of his community. Yet this condition has existed in many lands. If this "good" man were to delay his assaults and grant strangers a ten-day reprieve, he could study them and he might find them helpful and friendly. Then, because of better understanding, the slaying would be avoided and the man's morality advanced.

Most tribes, like the man just mentioned, have double moral codes—one set of rules for fellow tribesmen, who are called friends, and another set for outsiders, who are called enemies. The following list shows some of the practices of "good" tribesmen:

| <i>In dealing<br/>with members</i> | <i>In dealing<br/>with outsiders</i> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Deal fairly.                       | Cheat.                               |
| Aid.                               | Destroy.                             |
| Speak the truth.                   | Deceive.                             |
| Promote peace.                     | Promote war.                         |
| Serve.                             | Abuse.                               |

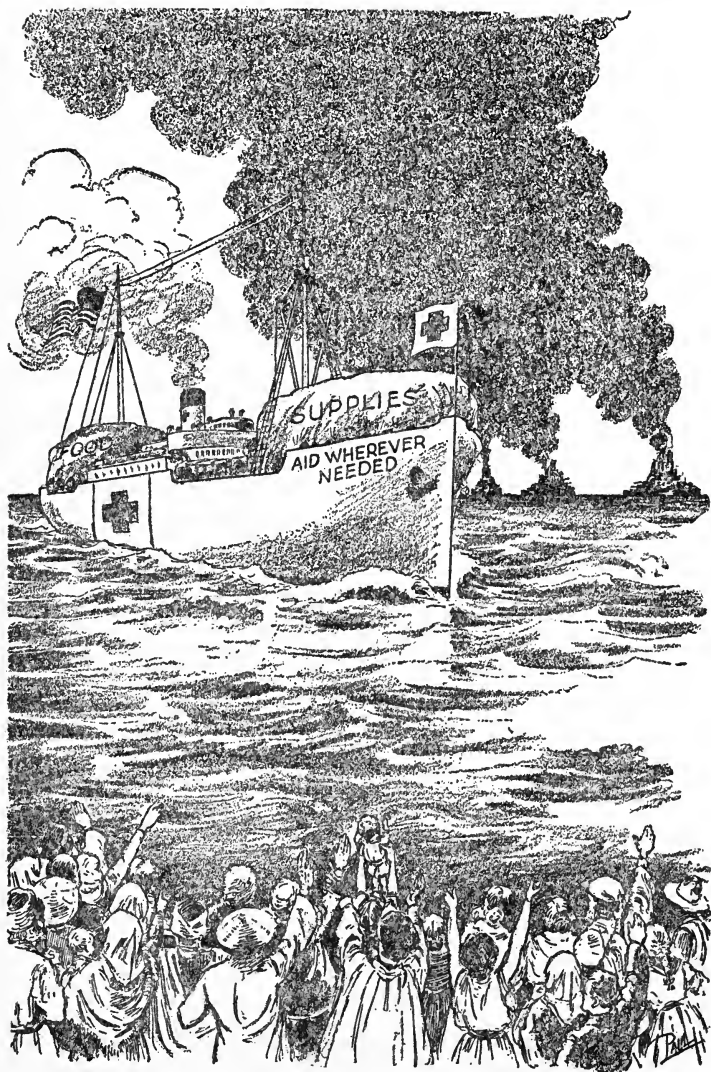
As a tribe develops it sometimes finds that another tribe can be helpful to it. Then many of the practices toward

members are extended to the useful outsiders. This extension of tribal attitudes goes on and on with many groups until strong intertribal relationships are developed. Finally the tribes become a nation. By this time the practices within the early tribe are extended to all members of the nation. Then a new and larger cycle begins. The nation finds a useful neighbor-nation. International relationships begin, and the national good will of the members of one nation is extended gradually to the citizens of other nations.

In this international stage, at which America now seems to be arriving, the misfortunes of other nations are viewed with pity. Money, food, and clothing are frequently sent to needy foreign citizens. Soon after 1918 many Americans sent aid to Germans with whom they had been at war. At the same time aid was sent also to needy people in Armenia and China. One of our merciful institutions, the Red Cross, is active in times of peace as well as in times of war. It helps needy people everywhere. These instances illustrate our present extensive morality—morality that extends in merciful ways to both strangers and friends. In these respects narrow tribal morality has changed to broad international morality. This progress has come through better understanding among peoples of different countries. Similar changes occur daily whenever two or more persons try earnestly to understand each other.

(2) *Progressive morality comes from better judgment about values.* To progress in this way people must find out first what things are true values. Then they must act according to their best information.

What are the true values in a person's life? Money seems to be one of these values. Many people would do almost



“PROGRESSIVE MORALITY”

anything to obtain it, especially if they could get a large amount of it. But some people care less for money than they do for the work that produces money. The late Charles Steinmetz, when he was chief consulting engineer of the General Electric Company, for example, could have obtained hundreds of thousands of dollars for his work, but he preferred freedom in carrying on his experiments. Consequently his salary covered only the necessities for living. Dr. Leroy L. Hartman refused to accept a quarter of a million dollars for about a dozen words. Instead he had these words mimeographed and distributed free to anyone who wanted them. He had, moreover, worked eighteen years to find out what he told in this brief message. His gift to the world is a desensitizer to check pain in teeth during dental work. Dr. Harry Steinbock, discoverer of Viosterol (Vitamin D), gave his discovery to his university, which has already received about one million dollars from it. These three men valued a large sum of money less than they did something else.

The value of anything depends on the person who judges it. One person may spend all his money to acquire a reputation, while another may spend his reputation to acquire a sum of money. Let us try to find out what makes an object seem valuable.

In infancy everyone *needs* food, clothing, and shelter. In adolescence everyone *desires*, instead, particular kinds of food, clothing, and shelter. A change occurs between infancy and adolescence—need is modified by desire. Desire leads us to think that money has value because it enables us to buy the particular kinds of things that we prefer. Values, then, depend on desires. An object is valued if it fulfills or helps to fulfill a desire.

But we must go further than this in our examination

of values. We may desire too much of a certain kind of food. Then our desire is a poor guide, because it would lead us to misery. As soon as we know this, we have two desires: a desire for the food and a desire for future happiness unimpaired by a stomach-ache. We must choose between these two desires, and our choice will depend on our scheme of values. In this choice the desired food has a here-and-now advantage. We can tell ourselves about the future, but it seems far away. Indeed it is so far away that many people fail to see it, and so they choose the food—with the result that experience teaches them a needed lesson. If experience does the teaching thoroughly, a different choice will be made the next time that the two desires conflict. By that time value will still depend on desire, but the first desire will be modified by a second and by information about both. We usually call a person wise who follows the better desire.

This step carries us much further on our way toward finding out what gives an object true value. We have found that one desire may be a poor guide and that the person who has only this desire needs experience. Of course he might take the word of someone else, but the glamour of desire may lead him "to find out for himself." In either case he schools his desire. After much such schooling, his desires may be safe guides.

A person who has well-schooled desires is a competent judge of value. In making choices he considers both the present and the future and both himself and others. He develops a conduct code and follows it until he finds a better one. Such a person may have a desire to avenge an injury, but he will have a stronger desire to avoid injuring another person. He may have a desire for much money, but he will have a stronger desire for the welfare



of others—he may acquire money, but he will not hurt others to obtain it. This person's morality will show progress, because he will have learned to discriminate among values and to conduct himself accordingly. He will guide himself by well-schooled desires.

(3) *Progressive morality comes from better judgment about right and wrong.* If a person is a keen judge of values and if he acts as he thinks, of course he is moral. But being moral is so difficult that definite ways for telling right from wrong in specific cases are needed. Six practical tests for discriminating between right and wrong have been described by Harry Emerson Fosdick in one of his "Riverside Sermons."<sup>1</sup> These tests follow, along with a portion of Dr. Fosdick's discussion.

a. *The test of common sense.* What would you say if someone challenged you to a duel? Mankind has already laughed such foolish conduct out of existence. What if you have good ability to accomplish worthy purposes and someone should urge you to forget about it and have a "good time"? Dr. Fosdick thinks it not worth his while to say that you would be bad if you yielded, but he is sure that he should call you silly. Don't be silly! Say this to yourself before someone else has to say it to you. Show that you have common sense. Don't be silly!

b. *The test of sportsmanship.* In a game you neither expect nor ask for favors. Life is like a game. Play the game! If everyone acted as you do, could the game go on? There can be no doubt why cheating and gossiping are wrong. Neither is there any doubt why it is wrong to mistreat people just because they are different from ourselves, financially or racially. Play the game!

c. *The test of one's best self.* You know and your closest

<sup>1</sup> *World Digest*, July, 1935, pp. 629-632.

friends know that you have what can be called a "best self." Call this self to your aid. Let it counsel you. Face yourself!

To thine own self be true,

.....

Thou canst not then be false to any man.

d. *The test of publicity.* What if everyone knew what you are planning to do? Strip it of secrecy. Carry it into open places. Imagine that your family and friends know about it. Think of having it talked about whenever your name is mentioned. Try it on the public! Phillips Brooks had this to say: "It is an awful hour when the first necessity of hiding anything comes. The whole life is different thenceforth. When there are questions to be feared and eyes to be avoided and subjects which must not be touched, then the bloom of life is gone. Put off that day as long as possible. Put it off forever if you can."

e. *The test of your most admired personality.* Someone is the most admired person that you know. Think of facing that person with your problem of right and wrong. Carry your problem to the light which that person throws about you.

f. *The test of foresight.* What will be the results of your choice? Where is your proposed course of behavior leading you? Discipline yourself by taking the long view. When you choose one end of a road, you also choose the other. Every course of behavior has an ending as well as a beginning. Look ahead!

These tests for right and wrong are practical. Try them! They will work.

(4) *Progressive morality comes from a better union of right thinking and right acting.* Morality requires action. We may

school our desires until we know and agree upon the true values of life, but we cannot achieve those values unless we do something. Thought is a guide and it can advance morality, but the greatest advancement comes only when it is combined with action.

Let us examine the following list of some of the things that we call true values:

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Intelligence         | Freedom    |
| Health               | Employment |
| Charm                | Money      |
| Friends              | Machines   |
| Social organizations | Leisure    |
| Design for living    | Amusement  |

Not one of these values can be achieved without action. Two of them, intelligence and health, may seem to have been ours at birth. In one sense they were; but in the sense that we now think of them, they were not. The ten-year-old's intelligence came from much action—without this action his score on any intelligence test would be zero. His health as well as yours came from much well-directed action—without such action he and you would not be here to judge this problem. Two other values, friends and money, may seem also to be achieved by some people without action. They are, in one sense; but in the sense that we are discussing, they are not. To have friends after the first few years of life, one must be a friend. To make money a value, one must use it. A man can starve while sitting on a bag of gold: He has failed to act and so his treasure has no value.

All the other items indicate more obviously the need for uniting thought and action, if they are to be true values. Charm is an achievement which the surly person

never acquires. Social organizations require vigorous membership; their value depends on the activity of every participant. Freedom and leisure are not for idleness any more than employment is for bondage. Our actions give them value; our actions determine also the quality of their value. Machines are useless unless we direct them. If we try to name a form of amusement that requires no action, we shall end by naming a profitless bore. Even a rattle or a teething ring requires action for its infantile value. We have to combine high thinking and well-considered action to achieve true value in any form of amusement.

Our morality depends on the quality of the union between right thinking and right acting in such practical, everyday items as these. We might discuss many other items such as honesty, temperance, respect for law, and protection of dumb animals, or we might discuss anger, jealousy, envy, and sex delinquency. But these items have been included under other names. If we have a good design for living, such a thing as jealousy or anger will find no place in it. If we have worthy acquaintances who honor us with their friendship, such things as honesty and temperance are forced upon us—if, indeed, they are not assumed. There is no need to add pages on each of these items. Neither is there need for discussing that most frequent of all immoralities, self-deception, if we harness our intelligence and face facts squarely.

We close this section on progressive morality, then, by drawing together some of its most practical points. First, moral progress consists of bringing greater good to a greater number of people. Second, we must improve our understanding of people. Third, we must study things that are called values to find out just what is "good." Fourth, we must school our desires. Fifth, we must apply severe

tests to our new problems of right and wrong. Sixth, we must unite right thinking with right acting. Seventh, we must reconstruct our own conduct when it falls below our standards.

#### 4. MANNERS

When Dolly Madison was the first lady of the land, one of her guests at the White House sipped the water from his finger bowl. Instead of showing disapproval or embarrassing him, she quietly raised her own finger bowl and drank from it. In Abraham Lincoln's days, many men who talked with him mispronounced certain words. If Lincoln needed to use those words later in the conversation, he either mispronounced them, too, or found substitutes for them. Gladstone, England's "grand old man" of the last century, never said, "I told you so."

These are examples of manners. In some respects they are like morals: They illustrate successful ways of getting along with other people, and they are applications of the Golden Rule. Moreover at least four of Dr. Fosdick's tests of right and wrong apply to each of these cases. In fact no one can draw a sharp line between morals and manners; therefore much of what follows applies to morals and much of what has preceded applies to manners.

Still there seems to be a difference between morals and manners. For example a young man who played in a professional orchestra refused to join the carousals of his associates. His refusal seems to have been a moral act. In refusing, this young man often offended his comrades by denouncing them as immoral. This part of his refusal was regarded as so ill-mannered that he was left behind when the orchestra started on its next tour. Some people cannot refuse even a sandwich without annoying other people by

shouting their refusal in a surly tone. Ungracious refusals lack charm, and possibly they are immoral. They give needless offense to other persons, and it may well be that any act which wounds someone needlessly is, to that extent, immoral. If this is so, the distinction between morals and manners dwindles further.

Let us seek an instance in which manners and not morals are involved. A story is told of two young ladies who were motoring in a sparsely settled region. Lunch stands were far apart and restaurants were uninviting. At last they were famished, and in desperation they stopped at a ramshackle coffee shop. They were seated at a table with an old man and then served promptly, but their coffee was hot enough for a salamander. They tried it and then waited uneasily. The old man noticed their difficulty, and wishing to be hospitable, addressed one of them, saying, "Here, miss, take my coffee. It's been sauced and blowed." The old man's motive seems to have been perfect; he was almost charming—and yet something was lacking.

Manners are practical. If two persons of similar preparation, health, and physique apply for a desirable position, and if one is polite and the other a boor, there is no question about which will be appointed. The same principle holds for two salesmen, two solicitors for favors, or even for two beggars.

Good manners are popular. The advantage of having good manners is so great and so well known that in recent years, all classes of people have attempted to acquire them. Many business firms train their employees in the good manners that apply particularly to their work. Many cities have trained their policemen in the same ways. This interest in manners is similar to the interest in morals—

people see the practical value of good manners and good morals. Customers respond favorably to well-mannered clerks, and so the merchant selects such clerks and trains them further in polite behavior. Politeness may be hard to acquire or difficult to practice, but it indicates good sense, and therefore it pays. Since it pays, politeness is becoming popular.

Far in the distance, far beyond manners, charm rises, elegant and humble, fascinating and disarming, inspiring and subduing, ready to direct and ready to serve. Manners have much to do with charm, but a person may know and practice all the rules of etiquette and still, as Miss Margery Wilson says, "remind us of nothing so much as a cold baked potato." Manners can cover pretense; charm cannot. Anyone can grit his teeth and scowl while he learns manners, but charm comes along a different path. One of the books that should be read in this connection is Miss Wilson's *Charm*.<sup>1</sup> There you will find what led a writer, centuries ago, to say, "Manners makyth the man."

Charm can be described in various ways. It includes superb expression of manners, good taste, knowing how to do the right thing at the right time, ease, grace, balance, poise, posture, tact, putting others at ease, and many other qualities that distinguish the most admired persons that we know. Its distinction comes partly from its individuality—it is beyond rules, although it includes them. The old man in the coffee shop would have been charming if he had known and practiced a few rules. We expect an intelligent person to know the rules of etiquette; the socially intelligent person knows also how, when, and where to modify the rules and add to them.

As charm includes and goes beyond the manners taught

<sup>1</sup> Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1934.

by books on etiquette, let us look for ways of cultivating charm. Here Miss Wilson can help us. She asks us to begin by becoming interested in other people. Interest turns us in the right direction. It begets kindness. With these two guideposts, interest in people and kindness, we can put ourselves in another person's place and be tolerant, patient, and courteous. Good sense will tell us what to do next. Among the things that good sense will tell us to do is to learn a few rules—one of which, for example, will be to wait until our coffee is cool instead of saucering and blowing it. Even awkwardness, the feet-and-hands variety, will vanish if we put ourselves aside and follow the direction of our guideposts. Most mannerisms, including blushing, are prompted by too much thinking of ourselves—they are banished, too, when we get ourselves out of our own way. By the same means conversation is improved in two ways—one becomes a better listener, and one's good sense urges one to develop correct speech and a voice that can be heard with pleasure. The relation of such matters as dress, neatness, cleanliness, and health to charm is too obvious to require treatment here.

✓ Charm comes not merely from being "natural," but from cultivating and following the lead of the best self that one can be. It can be acquired by anyone who uses a fair amount of good sense when he follows the guideposts. It requires a will and much practice. The best place to practice it is at home.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. If you could travel to any part of the world, in which country would you stay longest? What would you need to know about the morals and manners of that country in order to enjoy your visit?



2. What seems to you the strangest among the morals or manners of the country that you would visit? How do you account for this practice?

3. Debate: Does each person make his own morals or does society make them for him?

4. Why is it impossible for a person to avoid his moral responsibility by joining a corrupt organization?

5. Why does a person's moral responsibility follow him when he is in solitary existence? Compare your idea in this matter with Plato's: "If I were sure that God would pardon me and men would not know my sin, yet I should be ashamed to sin, because of its essential baseness."

6. What right has a person to interfere with another person's affairs?

7. What is the "greatest good"—power, contentment, wisdom, happiness, or something else? Many people have had difficulty with this question. Phillips Brooks said: "Things which never could have made a man happy, develop a power to make him strong. Strength and not happiness, or rather that happiness which comes by strength, is the end of human living."

8. It is said that we can endure our own misfortune more easily than other people's success. In what way is this a problem of progressive morality?

9. To what extent can desires be schooled so that they will not disqualify judgments of value?

10. Imagine that you are a salesman trying to sell something to a person who does not need it and who cannot afford it. Then try Dr. Fosdick's six tests. Would you accept the man's money or ask his forgiveness?

11. Why is it impossible to be moral without doing anything?

12. Which have changed in modern times, morals or ideas about morals? Give an example.

13. Summarize the ways for making moral progress.

14. What is your strongest argument in favor of good manners?

15. What are some of the differences between manners and charm?

16. Compute or catalogue as fully and exactly as you can the loss caused by one person's "blues" for one day. Do the same for the gains resulting from one person's charm. Select any day or situation. Then please read at least one of Miss Wilson's chapters!

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## UNIT V

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY





## CHAPTER XVI

# Personality and How It Develops

### I. WHAT PERSONALITY IS

PERSONALITY, like the puzzling "institutions" of Chapter XIV, is something which we all possess but which is not easy to define. In some ways personality resembles electricity. Both are powerful and effective. The effects of both can readily be observed, although they themselves are hard to see. We notice that some people have more "personality" than others and we find that they themselves are not always sure where they got it.

Personality has many sides. Expressions such as "Garbo, the mysterious," "Richard the Lionhearted," "Gentleman Jim Corbett," "Little Poker Face," and "Diamond Jim Brady," all refer to physical or emotional conditions which are combined to make a personality. The thousands of girls who flock yearly to Hollywood in the hope of becoming famous actresses often make desperate efforts to copy the personalities of stars who have already "arrived." Sometimes they are fairly successful, because many phases of personality are fortunately within control.

Personality can be defined as *the total combination of the effects which we have upon other people and upon ourselves*. This definition emphasizes the social aspects of personality—and rightly so, for we live in a complicated society where our happiness and success depend upon our effect on other

people. The expression "and upon ourselves" is also a necessary part of this definition. Surely a Scrooge, with the accumulated spleen and warped habits of a lifetime, who jeopardized the peace of mind and happiness of those around him, must also have had some effect upon himself—as, indeed, he had, if you will recall the story. A simple illustration of how we affect ourselves through appearance, a phase of personality, might be as follows: Suppose you have had a hard and discouraging day. Maybe it is blue Monday. Everything has gone wrong. You come home at night feeling bad enough, tired, disgruntled, and so on, and happen to glance in a mirror. You are likely to see there a frowning, dissatisfied, irritable-appearing person. Often such a picture further increases your depressed state of mind. Your own personality has bitten itself, so to speak.

Another way in which personality may affect one is through the influence that it has upon other people. Everyone past the age of six ought to know that social living is not a one-way process. If a man stood on the corner of the main street in town and jeered at everyone who passed, many people would return the favor in some way or other. We bring about, or induce, reactions in other people. Probably the reactions so induced are similar in general to our own—in their behavior toward us, people mirror our own personality traits. If we are cheerful, others will treat us cheerfully; if we are grouchy, others will treat us grouchily. In this way our personalities indirectly affect themselves. An attitude may be set up. For example many students complain that their teachers "have it in for them." This teacher attitude is regarded as mean and unfair. But ought a teacher be wholly blamed? Isn't it barely possible that his attitude may have been influenced by the unpleasant personality traits of the student? Teachers, after all, are



only human, and how can you expect them to be deeply interested in students who have been disrespectful, un-studious, noisy, troublesome, and otherwise nuisances? Some of you may have heard of the Golden Rule. It gives excellent advice for personality education.

All this implies that much that is connected with personality is within our own control. Indeed this is the case. Presently we shall consider personality traits which have been found by investigation to be important in many places in modern society and which, we shall see, are definitely within control. If you are willing to accept the definition of personality as the combination of our effects upon other people, and this is clearly a practical definition, then many things, such as appearance, become matters of concern. Another way of defining this elusive word is by trying to draw up a list of all the things that are helpful in making a wholesome personality. The trouble with this way of defining the word is that different things are combined in different individuals so that they produce similar effects upon other people. Hence we judge personality by its effects rather than by its constituents.

Of course it must be admitted that we cannot make our personalities as easily as we can a mud pie. If this were true, many an ambitious girl in Hollywood would become a Garbo overnight. Unquestionably there are elements in personality over which we have a minimum of control. The most notable of these are inherited traits.

Even in basic physical structure, however, changes can be made by oneself, unassisted, or by someone else. In appearance, for one thing, we can bring about an improvement with becoming clothes, neatness, cleanliness, and so on. The contour of our faces and our general bodily structure, however, are matters concerning which even

the plastic surgeon can effect only a limited amount of reform. One may have his face lifted or twenty pounds of fat removed, but after this is done, one is about the same creature as before the overhauling began. Nor need this disturb us unduly, for those who have made the closest study of personality have come to the conclusion that although these inherited factors of personality are undoubtedly present, they are not usually the most decisive about our success in the world. The most successful movie actresses are not always the most beautiful. Acting, which is largely an acquired accomplishment, has a greater influence. And it is so, likewise, in most things.

Other possible changes in physical characteristics are perhaps more striking. For example a disease of one of the glands within the body causes one's appearance to become very repulsive and one's habits to become sluggish and careless. A person afflicted with this terrible disease would not be said by most people to have an effective or pleasing personality. Until comparatively recently this condition had to be accepted as one of the inevitable and unchangeable phases of personality. At present, fortunately, this is not true. One so affected can be fed a certain gland extract which completely alters both his appearance and vitality. Undoubtedly more of such discoveries will be made, and it may well be that, in the future, defects in the basic physical part of personality, which we now regard as fixed, will be curable.

In summary, therefore, we may say that personality is the result of the effects that we have on other people and upon ourselves. These effects are produced by a combination of physical and social factors. Many of them are within our own control. It is our purpose in succeeding sections to consider certain personality traits and the spe-

cific ways in which the individual may alter his own personality.

## 2. THE VALUE OF AN ATTRACTIVE PERSONALITY

Every young person knows how valuable an attractive personality may be both financially and socially. There is probably no personal asset that one can cultivate and change to such outstanding advantage.

The value of a pleasing personality comes partly from the fact that it brings about pleasing reactions in others toward us, as we have already mentioned. But its value may also partially depend upon habits of response possessed by people other than ourselves. It is entirely possible that a personality which might be deemed attractive and acceptable in one place in society might not be in another. Even in the several trades, occupations, and professions, standards of personal acceptability vary. Obviously, then, the thing that is important is not so much to get a fixed personality from which you never change as to develop an effective method of adapting your personality to circumstances.

## 3. HOW PERSONALITY DEVELOPS

Since personality is the effect of hereditary factors and acquired habits, the growth of personality may be considered from these two angles.

No individual, of course, is the same for any two consecutive seconds of his life. We are all always changing. But there are times when change seems to be comparatively slow, and to all intents and purposes, the person

seems to be "the same." At other times changes are rather marked. One of these rather marked changes occurs during adolescence. Many of you who read this book are going through or have passed through that period.

During adolescence pronounced physical changes occur. These are often accompanied by equally or even more pronounced "mental" changes. The adolescent's feelings and actions are different from those of the child. He is likely to be awkward and somewhat embarrassed because of these changes. He sometimes feigns a dislike for the opposite sex because he has become more acutely aware of its members. He does more "abstract" or general thinking instead of concerning himself entirely with specific objects and situations.

This adolescent period is an acute growth stage not only for the physical organism but also for the developing habits which later on, taken as a whole, will be called personality. Generally speaking, physical changes are beyond the control of the individual or his fellows, but their meaning to him should be understood. This understanding will depend upon the sort of conduct that one's associates and elders exhibit during this rather critical time. Nothing constructive is contributed to another's personal development by jeering at him for his awkwardness. When the memory of our own difficulties at the same period is still fairly clear, such jeering is mutually detrimental.

Surrounded by a sympathetic environment, however, the adolescent himself must contribute certain things to his own development. Bashfulness cannot be overcome by withdrawing within oneself; conscious effort is necessary, and it is better policy to force oneself to participate in the social activities of the group. Serious mental derangements in middle-aged adults have been traced in thousands

of cases to the formation of incorrect personality habits during adolescence.

The adjustments which the developing individual must make are mental and physical. The awkward person is confronted primarily with a problem in mechanics. He must practice certain physical co-ordinations that lead to good posture. This practice is not always successful, and its effects are likely to amuse others. Soon, however, a person with a little backbone learns to endure friendly amusement with a minimum amount of resentment and worry. Other personality adjustments of adolescence are not mechanical and physical but social. This has already been implied in some of the examples given.

In closing this discussion of personality growth, we wish to emphasize especially that habit plays a vital role. Many are tempted to think of personality as something which can be turned on or off at will. This is a decided misconception. In spite of the qualities attributed to personality in fiction, movies, and the like, psychologically analyzed, it is not mysterious; it consists primarily of a definite set of habits built up by the same sort of practice employed in memorizing a multiplication table. This does not mean that one automatically falls into a personality, for habits themselves are not easy to build up. The secret of the development of a successful personality is knowing what habits will be favorably received by others and having the patience to cultivate these habits.

#### 4. FACTORS THAT AFFECT PERSONALITY

It takes only a moment's reflection to realize that the way in which other people feel toward us is determined by what we ourselves do. Usually when we change our

appearance, habits, and attitudes, the reactions of others change, and we say that our "personality" has changed. Therefore even with the definition of personality that we have accepted, it is necessary to examine closely the things that the individual does which have this effect upon other people.

Before we consider specific personality traits and attempt to predict the effects of these traits upon people in general, it is necessary to examine some of the things which produce the characteristics that we have. Some influences touching personality are as follows:

(1) *Other people*. We form our habits of reaction primarily upon the basis of the people in whose society we have been. Our personality is likely to take on some of the characteristics of the group. But all groups do not have the same customs, nor do they regard favorably the same actions. Hence a transfer from one group to another may literally necessitate a change of personality.

(2) *Physical defects*. Any pronounced physical defect is likely to call attention to the person possessing it. This special notice is likely to take the form of some attitude, such as pity, sympathy, avoidance, and so on. The attitude, in turn, produces a response in the one so viewed, and may cause him to modify his actions and personality accordingly.

(3) *Books*. Books vary in the extent to which they sway people's actions. A book like the Bible has definitely influenced the actions, attitudes, and personalities of millions of people. In books we see portrayed personalities of others, real and fictitious. These people of literature may, at times, influence our personality with almost the force of actual, living people.

(4) *Motion pictures*. Millions of people go each year to

motion-picture theaters. In the pictures they witness portrayals of various personality types. They see actors and actresses themselves representing definite types. Many young people actually imitate the screen characters seen. Juvenile court records are full of cases of young delinquents who have been under the delusion that they could acquire money, luxurious cars, and so on, by imitating movie gangsters. Good effects of motion pictures are probably even more numerous.

(5) *Homes*. The home is a determinative factor in one's personality, because it exerts its influence at such an early time. It is recognized that early surroundings are powerful. In the home also we get our first practice in dealing with other persons in ways which have already been pointed out.

(6) *Money*. A certain individual once said of another, "She used to be a fine girl until her father found oil in the backyard. Now she's stuck up and I don't like her." This is an illustration of one effect that money may have upon one's way of behaving and of the attitudes which such behavior arouses in other people.

(7) *Government*. Unless one has traveled extensively throughout the world, one can hardly realize how different conditions are in countries under varying governments. In the United States we believe in freedom of the individual to develop and express his own personality. In many other places, however, the individual's personality is cut out for him by patterns, so to speak, and departures from these patterns are likely to be punished.

(8) *Churches*. Churches exert a decisive force in personality development. In churches many definite social attitudes are expressed. Certain types of conduct are urged upon one, and these are often of the kinds which touch others.

## 5. ESSENTIAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

Before considering specific personality traits, one should notice that personality represents a combination of many things. It is just as difficult to give an accurate description of the effects of personality by naming its several factors as it is to give an accurate picture of a human being by making a list of the chemical elements in his body. The final effect, the sum total of the traits, is more important, often, than the individual traits themselves. For example in making candy, you may have all the ingredients apparently in the correct proportions and still not get good results. Often just a little experimenting, such as, for instance, changing the length of time of cooking or the amount of some ingredient, will produce an entirely different result in the final product. This is likewise true of personality. It is quite possible to mention some of the definite behavior traits that one should have to achieve a personality of a defined sort. But like the candy, the combination is sometimes difficult to get. This does not mean that it is unnecessary to know the ingredients of certain kinds of candy or the traits of a certain kind of personality.

We arrived at the following list of personality traits by asking a large number of young people to name the characteristics to which they reacted favorably and which caused them to like a person. You may check yourself against this list of traits if you are curious enough to do so. The personality traits given below represent a fairly general cross section of the opinion of young people today. We all know that no one can possess all these worth-while traits to a maximum extent. Perhaps we should not even like such a person if one could be found. But he who is



noticeably lacking in too many of these traits and attitudes is probably not well liked by his fellows. Ask yourself how you rate on these items. Even though self-rating is not a perfect method of getting a picture of oneself, it has value, and even those who are able to fool other people cringe internally sometimes if they ask themselves the right questions. Try it and see.

(1) *Reliability*. Reliability is one of the things that "make the world go round." It is a trait both of character and of personality. How well would society get along if railroad trains never ran on schedule, streetcars never stopped when they were supposed to, janitors never built fires at the times when fires were needed? You know what would happen. We could never get to the places we wished to go to. We should be cold when we needed to be warm. All manner of things would be awry with the world. Reliability is valued as a personality trait among people, not necessarily on sentimental, but on sound business, grounds. No one likes to deal with a person who is absolutely unreliable, or even comparatively so.

Reliability applies not only to actions but also to statements. Many people can tolerate what are called "white lies," or perhaps even a few grayish ones, but the person who is habitually unreliable in his statements soon loses the confidence of his fellows.

Lack of reliability is as much a habit as anything else. Habits of reliability are formed when we are young, and without exception, should be carefully conserved. If we form the habit of getting up promptly in the morning when the alarm clock rings, then the alarm clock becomes a reliable method of awaking us. If we allow an exception to occur once, twice, and then several times, we can learn to pay no attention to alarm clocks and to sleep through

their clamor. We then become unreliable. The same thing is true of social relationships. Say to yourself, "Oh, it won't hurt if I'm a little late this once," and it will be a little easier to say it the next time. Soon you are likely to become one of those odious people for whom it is simply impossible to keep an appointment on time.

(2) *Optimism*. "Smile and the world smiles with you" is an old saying. Our associates are easily influenced by our behavior, and if this behavior is depressed and downcast, it seldom serves to have an exhilarating effect upon them. Probably pessimism is oftener carried too far than optimism, although it is possible to be unduly optimistic. Optimism is not an unmixed blessing. A person may have a slight illness which would soon disappear if he gave it proper care. An unbalanced optimist might be likely to take the attitude that health is bound to come anyway, and hence to be too careless.

(3) *Tolerance*. The more people there are in a limited area, the more complicated becomes the problem of their getting along together. No two groups of persons are exactly alike in their ideals, customs, and habits—just as no two individuals are exactly alike. The only thing that makes life endurable under such circumstances is tolerance for one another's conduct. This does not always take the form of enduring things that we dislike. Sometimes a little judicious maneuvering on our part will lead an associate to stop doing something annoying. Many of the disagreements and much of the intolerance in the world are capable of easy remedy. After all, tolerance is a frame of mind rather than a given set of habits or conduct. Get into the right frame of mind and convince yourself that after all, others may have just as much reason to be vexed with you as you have to be vexed with them. If this viewpoint



"... AND THE WORLD SMILES WITH YOU."

is adopted, everything is likely to run smoothly. One of the reasons that used to be given in favor of early marriages was that by marrying young, people had an opportunity of getting used to each other before their habits of life had been rigidly fixed, since fixed habits are likely to lead to intolerance. This argument is not particularly sound, for youth is just as much a matter of condition of mind as of body. This is especially true in social conduct.

(4) *Unselfishness*. It is a bit unjust to blame people severely for being selfish. After all there are many things in the life of a baby which start him toward a career of selfishness. He is watched over and cared for by his elders, and all too often he is allowed to remain very long in a state of complete dependence. The natural outcome of this is selfishness. But a world made up of entirely selfish people would be an unpleasant one in which to live. It would require more or less of a "dog-eat-dog" sort of existence. We should train ourselves in the habit of frequently doing something for someone else when no reward is in sight. It is a hard thing for some people to do, but in the long run it is a course which pays. If you are a selfish person and proud of it, and if you think that the world is such an entirely selfish place that you must act the way you do in order to get along in it, then don't ever expect anyone else to do you a good turn.

(5) *Consideration*. The foundation of all morals and manners is true consideration for other people. Consideration is related to tolerance and unselfishness, but has a characteristic peculiarity of its own. A person might be optimistic, tolerant, and relatively unselfish, and yet carelessly inconsiderate. Consideration implies a certain amount of thoughtful attention to another's wishes and likes. The

inconsiderate person is likely to be immoral and he is often disagreeable.

Superficially allied to true consideration is the quality of social grace or affability. But this quality often has little to do with morality; indeed it is possible that socially polished people may be altogether lacking in real consideration for others. Many persons of questionable morals have gained popular favor because they know how to be ingratiating; a good example is the politician who goes about slapping voters' backs and kissing their babies, but who shows his utter lack of true consideration when he misappropriates the taxpayers' money. Other more worthy souls, lacking social wisdom about affability, have been thoroughly disliked. Fundamental moral issues need not be at stake to cause one to like or dislike a person.

(6) *Industry*. The legends and folklore of all people are full of stories of the rewards which the industrious receive. The advance of civilization depends on people's efforts. Most persons recognize this. And therefore industry in the individual is regarded as a commendable personality trait. Indeed this is the reason that some people would rather work than receive relief. They know that in the long run too much relief, however necessary at a given time, may lead to the breaking down of our social institutions.

(7) *Sincerity*. Sincerity is a homely but worthy virtue. One does not have to be brilliant to be sincere, but most of us prefer the sincere person to the brilliant trickster. Real sophistication, in the best sense of the word, is not based upon insincerity. Some say that the younger generation of today hasn't much respect for sincerity. If this is true we should try to do something about it. Great nations of the world are today at swords' points and have

scattered fragments of broken treaties over the earth because they were not sincere in pledging agreements to each other. In the long run sincerity, like honesty, pays—both in personal and group conduct. Temporarily one may seem to have suffered a loss through acting in a straightforward fashion in a situation, but particularly when one has to get along with the same people over a period of time, sincerity is the best policy.

(8) *Appearance.* We have often heard that clothes make the man. High school pupils know something about this. Girls in high school have already learned many ways to improve their appearance and to keep it improved. Boys are frequently less careful, and although negligent dressing does not make a great deal of difference at the high school age, there is a possibility of forming careless habits which may prove detrimental later on. Many boys have the notion that to be neat and attractive in appearance is to be “sissified.” This is by no means the case. Such men as Jack Dempsey, Gene Tunney, Barney Ross, Freddie Steele, and many others who practice the “manly” art of boxing are excellently groomed. No one has ever (successfully) called any of them “sissies.” In considering the relation between appearance and personality, you should remember that personality involves the judgment of yourself by others. Appearance has much to do with that judgment.

Those who have studied the details of appearance which are most likely to influence other people assert that attractiveness is neither difficult to cultivate nor expensive. This is true for both boys and girls. Cleanliness ranks high among the factors of attractiveness. And cleanliness means not only enough baths but also other things, such as the care of the teeth and fingernails. It is surprising how many

people these days, who are otherwise rather well groomed, allow their teeth to go unbrushed.

Attractiveness of clothing is primarily a matter of neatness. Everyone knows that young people do not have unlimited amounts of money to spend on clothes, but there is no excuse for slovenliness. As with cleanliness there is a difference between neatness and fastidiousness. Both neatness and cleanliness, in fact all matters of appearance, are largely the result of habit. If one button comes off your coat and you do not pay any attention to it, then the loss of another one is not likely to bother you very much. Form reasonable habits of neatness and cleanliness and follow them.

(9) *Friendliness*. Psychologists have quarreled many times in the past as to whether people are naturally friendly or hostile. We do not need to settle this controversy to determine that friendliness is an attractive feature in personality. Friendliness is the result partly of habit and partly of other, more basic traits. Some people seem naturally to have the attitude and habit of being friendly. Others apparently have an opposite tendency. Both are likely to get corresponding results from other people.

Friendliness does not mean going around with a stage smile for everybody and a hypocritical air of seeming to think that nothing could possibly be wrong with the world. Friendliness, to be effective with other people, should be combined with a trait discussed above—sincerity. Sincere friendliness is a wonderful asset to anyone's personality. How much easier progress in the world is if we have friends, and how much more likely we are to have friends if we are friendly ourselves!

(10) *Initiative*. You know what a "go-getter" is. Who doesn't? The go-getter has initiative. Initiative is a trait

that is prized in people because it indicates that they are likely to get along in the world. Lack of initiative or go-getter qualities has prevented the progress of many a capable young man and young woman. And again we are forced to stress our oft-repeated principle of habit. How easy it is to start putting things off! You have heard the saying, "Never do today what you can put off till tomorrow." A fine way to get over an attack of influenza, but that's about all.

A certain young lady was once engaged to a certain young man. The young man seemed to be a most admirable prospective husband. His habits were good. His intelligence was above average. He had done fairly well in his schoolwork. But one day the young lady broke the engagement, much to the surprise of the young man and to the annoyance of several other people. When asked the cause of her action, she said, "He is losing his initiative!" Subsequent years proved the correctness of her statement.

The fatal results of a gradual loss of initiative are well known. One of the worst of all kinds of mental breakdown is the extreme result of loss of initiative. It is characterized by an increasing lassitude and lack of interest in the surrounding world. We should be fortunate, indeed, if we knew exactly the cause of lack of initiative in all cases. In some complex forms of mental breakdown, such as the one mentioned, we do *not* know it. But we *do* know, and this is a hopeful thing, that often it is just the result of careless, sloppy habits formed during adolescence. Get interested in something—anything within reason—and then keep doing something about it.

On the other hand the opposite extreme of go-getterism may prove to be an unattractive personality trait. The noisy "pusher," vulgarly thrusting himself forward and



always "blowing his own horn," is a familiar and unpopular type, and often his efforts to get ahead are so overdone that they repel others and defeat their own end. In initiative, as in everything else, it is desirable to find the happy medium.

(11) *Courage*. Courage is something that practically everyone admires. Very often a person is forgiven for the lack of many other commendable traits of character or personality, if he has courage. There are many ways in which courage may be defined. It might be called the ability to endure pain. Some would say that it is the choice of right instead of wrong. One good definition is that courage is the quality of facing reality to the best of our ability. From this standpoint courage is related to mental hygiene, a factor which we shall consider presently.

Courage is probably a mixture of inherited and learned traits. Some people, for example, are born able to bear more pain than others. However in the ordinary sense of the word, they would not be called more courageous, since the effort required on their part is not large. People of equally great inborn ability to exhibit courage do so in varying degrees. Therefore we recognize in courage a strong element of habit. And if courage is partly habitual, this fact supplies a lesson in personality development for us. If we form the habit of facing reality courageously, we shall acquire greater ability to do so as time goes on.

(12) *Humor*. Many of you have read the book by Owen Wister in which a certain individual was willing to be called a hard name if the caller smiled when he said it. This episode rings true to life. Were it not for the sense of humor, there would be even more fights in the world than there are today.

No one knows exactly what constitutes humor; yet

everyone has a notion of what it is. Certain of its physical manifestations are recognizable by anyone. It is related to relaxation as anger is related to tenseness. But we do not need to define humor exactly in order to appreciate its importance among the traits in our personality in so far as they influence conduct. This holds for both individuals and nations. As Lloyd George has recently said, one of the most ominous signs in the always tense European situation is that statesmen seem to have lost their sense of humor.

Like so many other traits that we have discussed, a sense of humor is partly hereditary and partly acquired. Certainly many people are happy who have less reason to be so than some others who are not happy. Often we find that people whom we should expect to be good-humored, because of their many possessions and fortunate endowments, are not so at all. Moreover we find that many who are not especially well blessed, whether with the world's goods or a fine physical endowment, are full of good humor and happiness. Try cultivating the habit of good nature and fun; then no matter what life may do to you, you can always face it cheerfully. "When you call me that, *smile*."

(13) *Confidence*. The confident man is not only an object of admiration to his friends but also a more efficient member of society than the one who lacks confidence. Being confident means trusting in oneself. Lack of confidence makes one ineffective in situations in which one might otherwise accomplish much.

The inferiority complex, of which we hear so much, is the result of lack of confidence. A person is in danger of acquiring an inferiority complex if he is subjected to repeated failure. Therefore in trying to build up confidence either in ourselves or in others, we should select tasks that

can be accomplished successfully. Confidence is largely the result of tasks well done.

(14) *Enthusiasm*. Everyone is familiar with the value of interest in promoting efficiency. It is hard for anyone to do anything well if he is not interested in it. Enthusiasm comes partly as the result of a habitual attitude and partly as the result of participation in some activity. It is possible to become enthusiastic over something about which we had not expected to be by simply going to work at it.

(15) *Lack of affectation*. Were you brought up in a neighborhood in which there was some little boy or girl who was "stuck up"? Practically everyone was. Can you recall the attitude of the other children toward this child? Most people react in a similar fashion toward affectation. Confidence tells a man to believe in his own ability and candor inclines him to give a worthy appraisal of himself. But affectation urges him either to boast of qualities in which he excels or to pretend to have others that he does not actually possess. Such affectation is always an object of pain to his friends and is especially embarrassing, because it is hard to correct without offending the person involved. Of course if you have that delightful objectivity of mind which urges you to want your best friends to be frank with you, you are well fortified against such an undesirable personality trait as affectation. Try asking them about yourself some time.

(16) *Sex Appeal*. The personality value, not to mention the conversational value, of sex appeal has nearly been ruined by extremists both in Hollywood and elsewhere. That does not alter the fact that sex is a factor in personality. It is thoroughly conservative to say that probably most people admire a person in whom sex is unobtrusively but definitely evidenced. Almost no one, however, admires

men with feminine affectations or vice versa. Within the realm of good taste, "sex appeal" is desirable. There should be no criticism, for example, of a young lady who, through the art of make-up and otherwise, renders herself as attractive as possible. But the girl who, by daring and flamboyant techniques, tries to pattern her life after that of a movie vampire is bound for trouble. In no other aspect of personality culture can delicacy of understanding be shown to better advantage.

(17) *Poise*. Poise is closely related to confidence but not synonymous with it. A person may be confident and not well poised, or well poised and not especially confident. However confidence is likely to lead to better poise, and the habit of poise is likely to increase confidence.

Poise is the habit of carrying oneself well. This may include both physical posture and mental equilibrium. The two are not necessarily synonymous any more than poise and confidence are. A person may have atrocious physical posture and yet be thoroughly at ease in his own mind, but he does not make so good an impression upon other people, or at least upon some other people. Neither does the person whose physical bearing is above reproach, but who is easily flustered mentally, give the best impression.

(18) *Adaptability*. All of us are likely to be a little disturbed if placed in a situation radically different from any with which we are familiar. The person who adapts himself readily to such situations is always an object of admiration. How does one acquire adaptability? The answer is simple: by forcing oneself to adapt to a variety of situations. This is something that we can all do. For instance one can never learn to adapt to groups by always avoiding the opportunity to appear before them. Some students

go through their entire elementary and secondary school education without actually appearing before a gathering even of their own classmates more than once or twice. Small wonder such individuals are confused when they have to appear before large audiences in later life. Seek out diverse opportunities, even though your efforts are not always crowned with success. Do different things. In this way only is it possible to become highly adapted to a number of situations.

(19) *Versatility*. The person who is adaptable is also versatile. But versatility has more of an active element in it. The person who can adapt himself to a number of situations does so, of course, by means of active behavior, but not in the sense in which the versatile person does. Versatility has more the meaning of the ability to *do* many things. There is the further implication that the person who is versatile accomplishes the many things that he does rather well. The jack-of-all-trades who in random fashion can perform a number of different acts is not usually called versatile.

Versatility is the result of being fortunate in the possession of several talents. To become adept at several kinds of performances requires not only practice and energy but patience as well. Too often one does not become nearly so proficient in something as he might become, because of an effort to gain skill in three or four other lines; such a policy prevents him from concentrating his energies upon and persisting in one thing until he has mastered it.

(20) *Self-control*. Self-control is a character trait, but it has a personality aspect. The personality features of self-control are inherent in the effect which the control we have over ourselves produces in other people. As is the case with so many personality traits, appearance is impor-

tant. From the standpoint of real character, if one actually has control of his actions, that is the beginning and the end of it. On the other hand self-control as a personality trait involves just a little more; it involves not only being self-controlled, but also *appearing* so. It is entirely conceivable that a person may have self-control and yet not be given credit for it by other people.

Self-control does not necessarily imply doing any given things. It indicates rather that a person has the self-discipline necessary to carry out any line of action once it has been intellectually adopted. Whether or not the action meets with other people's approval is not a problem in control.

(21) *Sophistication*. Many young people love to appear sophisticated. Now the root meaning of this word is wisdom. And yet after they have done certain things in order to appear sophisticated, even young people themselves are not always sure of the wisdom of what they have done. Sophistication is an abused word and an abused idea. It does not mean drinking just because other people drink. It does not mean using a certain piece of slang just because other people think it is clever. The essential basis of sophistication, regardless of what one's own standard of action may be, is understanding. The sophisticate is wise, in the best sense of the word, about many things. That kind of sophistication is well worth having. Of course experience has something to do with it. But variety of experience may be interpreted in several ways, and one of them is that to some extent it may be gained vicariously—that is, through profiting by the actions of others. Sophistication can be acquired in this way also. We should all be dead if we had to become sophisticated concerning the poisonous effects of arsenic by eating it. In a certain sense one can

be sophisticated about many things without having experienced them.

(22) *Tact*. The well-disposed person is not always well liked. Sometimes his manners are very bad indeed. Tact may have nothing to do with one's essential worth, except, perhaps, in so far as essential merit makes easier the task of treating others with consideration. Even honest expression of opinion, certainly admirable from the standpoint of good character, may be phrased in such a way as to cause negative reactions in others.

(23) *Sense of proportion*. It is said that in some countries death used to be the penalty for stealing a loaf of bread. Many people today think that this punishment is out of proportion to the magnitude of the offense. Sense of proportion is a very important personality trait. It implies, among other things, keeping our emotional responses governed by some intellectual criterion. For example it keeps us from flying into a rage at trivial incidents. It keeps us from hating our teacher because he may justly discipline us for some infraction of the rules. The person who makes no effort at all to cultivate a sense of proportion does all manner of ridiculous things. He flies into rhapsodies over trivialities of scenery, sayings, and so on, and he is just as likely to fly into a rage over some minor inconvenience. Lack of a sense of proportion produces the sort of person who thinks that everything is either "too, too divine" or "perfectly abominable."

(24) *Good taste*. Good taste may be practiced primarily by thinking before acting and by then not doing about half the things that are thought of. It is involved in a number of actions performed in everyday life—good taste about what to say at the proper time, taste in literature, music, or home furnishing, taste in dancing and dressing,

taste in how to behave in public, taste in the use of perfumes and cosmetics, and so on. It is difficult to give specific advice about good taste; the best way to acquire it is to study as much as possible about a wide range of subjects and to note carefully the opinions of accepted authorities on these subjects. In this way we can cultivate good taste until it becomes almost instinctive, a sort of "second nature."

## 6. PERSONALITY IN SOCIETY

It would be possible to write a whole book about personality in society. In all social life it is important. Even children know that it is not only what we are that makes us a social success, but also what we seem to be. The traits which have been discussed above are very important among those that are involved in what we seem to be. There is nothing wrong about wishing to be successful socially and cultivating a personality to produce that end.

In industry personality is likewise all-important. Any sales manager can give a long harangue on the value of a good personality in salesmanship. Formerly technical qualifications were stressed above everything else in the industrial world. Of course such qualifications are just as important now as they ever were, but even in the recent past, no one would have thought of using such devices as personality tests in order to decide about hiring a person for an ordinary job of salesmanship. Today this is done in many large industrial concerns. Industrial personnel directors are busy all the time trying to determine whether or not the personalities of those who are being considered for positions are suitable for those positions. Investigators have even made studies, and elaborate ones, too, of the



necessary personality traits in different occupations. Although in general what we call a good personality succeeds practically anywhere, great differences in emphasis are required for different kinds of work. For example an expert at repairing watches, who does not meet customers but sits by himself all day using only the various instruments of his trade, does not need tact—at least not to the extent required by the man who sells watches over the counter. If you are interested in psychology there is no more profitable field open at the present time than that of employment psychology, a great part of which is given over to the study of the personality traits important in business and of methods of developing these traits in those who are training for business.

## 7. CONTROLLING YOUR OWN PERSONALITY

You have all heard the words of the Scottish poet Robert Burns:

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us  
To see oursels as others see us!

Burns to the contrary, however, it is possible not only to see ourselves psychologically but also to make improvements where what we see does not satisfy us. There are two general techniques for self-analysis. One is *self-rating according to some systematic plan* like the inventory presented in Chapter XI. There are self-rating scales for evaluating various personality traits in oneself on the market at the present time. A person is never so blind to his own defects as when he will not look into a psychological mirror.

Knowing one's limitations, of course, is only the begin-

ning of improvement. However getting the desired result is no different from and no more mysterious than repairing the engine in an automobile. It consists primarily of self-experimentation; it means trying various possibilities in conduct and judging their effectiveness by the reactions secured through them. Sometimes the change will be simply one in appearance. One man bettered his impression upon other people almost unbelievably by the simple expedient of getting a haircut once every three weeks instead of once every six months. This was not a radical character revision, but it made a great difference financially.

In addition to self-evaluation there is the plan of *making your best friends tell you*. Since there is nothing to which many people react more unfavorably than being told the truth about themselves, this is sometimes difficult to do. Once you can get people to talk with you freely, however, about ways in which you might improve, you are in possession of an invaluable source of information. For one thing you get not only the benefit of the personal opinion of the individual speaking but also the advantage of learning all the different things that he may have heard about you—and usually there are plenty!

But to be successful in controlling and improving your personality, at least as other people judge it, your reactions to the suggestions of others must be highly objective. The most human tendency is to attempt to defend everything that you have done and every trait that you possess. Understandable as this practice is, it is fatal. Of course this does not mean that a person should change every time he gets a suggestion. A perfectly objective evaluation of the suggestion of another concerning yourself may result in your discarding the suggestion. If, how-

ever, you find yourself regarding as ridiculous and discarding all the honest suggestions which you receive, then you should be somewhat suspicious of your own motives.

## 8. HELPING OTHERS IN PERSONALITY GROWTH

We are interested not only in improving ourselves but also in helping others to improve. Every person with many friends gets hundreds or even thousands of chances in the course of a year to make suggestions, many of which have to do with the personality traits of others. When we can succeed in making such suggestions tactfully, we are often able to help a person to a more effective social adjustment. Often, however, we are too much concerned either with the sensation of the moment (in case we are acting unfavorably ourselves) or with the fear that the suggestion will not be gratefully and amicably received.

Helping others in personality growth involves, of course, knowing the personality traits that are important, and also being able to analyze the elements of a psychological situation. Often we see a person who we know is unpopular without our knowing exactly why. After we have determined the cause, there remains the task of pointing out diplomatically the nature of his shortcoming to him. Many people who succeed at such difficult tasks employ a combination of flattery and suggestion. They are likely to say, "Your presentation was very good indeed. Everybody liked it. I believe, however, that you would have done even better had you been a little less critical of certain situations." This technique is successful within limitations. Of course if you are altruistic enough to try to improve your friends in this way, you may succeed in doing so. But many of your friends may resent your counsel

even though it is given for their benefit. Your own social judgment must guide you in this endeavor.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. What do you understand by the statement that personality resembles electricity? In what ways are the two similar? Unlike?

2. How is it possible for anyone to have an effect upon his own personality? Cite an illustration other than the one given in this chapter.

3. How much importance do you personally attach to physical appearance in judging anyone's personality? See if your friends agree with you.

4. Explain the process of inducing reactions in other people.

5. Name three or four of the factors which influence personality development and expand the discussion in the text on these.

6. To what extent do you approve of the list of personality traits, beginning with reliability, given in this chapter? What traits do you think that the discussion overemphasizes? Underemphasizes? Compare the discussion in Section 6 on personality in society with that in Chapter XV on manners and morals. What is their relationship?

7. To what extent and in what sense can personality be controlled?

8. Give two or three specific examples illustrating some ways in which you have helped someone else in personality development.

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## CHAPTER XVII

# Physical and Mental Hygiene

### I. WHAT IS HYGIENE?

SINCE the days when people first began to consider the training of the young, health has stood high among educational aims. All who are able to read these words know that sickness, either of the body or mind, interferes with personal and social life and with the attainment of success and happiness. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss some of the ways in which the health of both body and mind can be preserved. We all know that prevention is an extremely important element in health, both mental and physical: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Our point of view is a simple one, practical rather than theoretical. When we talk of *physical*, we mean those things which, according to a common-sense way of speaking, are ordinarily regarded as physical, such as manual labor, athletic sports, and so on. When we use the expression *mental*, we refer to such things as imagination, fear, worry, and thinking.

Generally speaking, there are two ways in which hygiene may be regarded. First, it is possible and desirable to prepare an exact list of specific items of health, such as body temperature, weight, and so on. For example the average normal temperature of a person is 98.6 degrees Fahren-

heit. Any great change from this temperature is viewed suspiciously by the physician or the educated layman. But there are healthy people whose temperature is not exactly 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. Furthermore anybody's temperature may vary a little from this figure without indicating that he is ill. One's temperature has a tendency to be slightly different after a meal than before. Take another example, that of weight. A few years ago weight charts were posted in nearly every school and in many homes. By consulting such a chart you could tell the "correct" weight for a certain age and height. When we say "correct," we mean that you could find out the average weight for people of that age and height. Many persons believed that to be healthy you had to weigh almost exactly the amount shown on the chart. The present point of view is quite the contrary. Your weight may vary from the average for your age and height and yet be the best weight for your own personal efficiency. Of course a great variation from the average weight for one's age and height calls for some attention.

A second way of looking at hygiene, both physical and mental, is to view it from the standpoint of a person's behavior. This book treats social science as primarily a study of the problem of adjustment. Adjustment, in turn, depends on definite knowledge, habits, and attitudes. Health is no exception to this rule. When we view health as adjustment, our problem in discussing it is simplified. Health as adjustment implies behavior that is (a) adequate, (b) efficient, and (c) comfortable. A person who is making an adequate adjustment to his environment, who is meeting certain standards of efficiency, and who is comfortable according to his own judgment, is healthy. Of course there are certain qualifications and exceptions

to this rule, as to all rules. One point to be mentioned is that a person may be comfortable while he is acquiring a dangerous disease. However most troubles that are physically dangerous are uncomfortable in their early stages. Thus we have a new attitude toward pain, for pain is not always our enemy; sometimes it is our friend. It is a warning that our health is in danger, and that our behavior may consequently become inadequate and inefficient.

## 2. EARLY YEARS IN HEALTH TRAINING

In a previous chapter the machinelike structure of the body was described. Indeed the body is like a machine in many ways, but there is one important difference. A machine cannot, by itself, replace its outworn and broken parts. To a certain extent the human body can replace its parts, and in this respect, it excels the most wonderful machine. In such replacement, however, the humble angleworm excels even the human body. Many of you know that if an angleworm is cut in two, the result is two live angleworms and not one dead one. This result comes from the regenerative power of living tissue.

Although the human body is different from a machine in its ability to replace its own broken-down parts, it is like one in certain respects. The first of these likenesses is that some parts of the body are difficult to replace; others are replaced very slowly. There are still others that cannot be replaced at all. Another way in which the body is like a machine is that early wear and tear reduce later efficiency. If you have ever "broken in" a car, you know exactly what is meant. A new car can endure a great deal of abuse. Rough use does not seem to injure it. One may



think the car will always be new and that it will always be able to endure the same hard treatment. If you have driven cars, you know that this is not the case. If your automobile is carelessly broken in, it is inefficient for the rest of its life. Likewise if your body is broken in carelessly, the results are the same. This is a point that is very hard for young people to accept. They are like new cars and feel able to endure rough use. Furthermore few young people have talked to many persons who have been careless early in life and sorry later. But physicians can tell a long story, indeed, on this point. It is not mere preaching to say that if young people would give more attention to their hygiene problems, their later adjustment would be more adequate, efficient, and comfortable.

### 3. BREAKDOWNS IN PHYSICAL HEALTH

Most of the points that we shall now discuss have definite practical value: You can do something about them today. Others are partly technical and expert advice may be needed before you should do anything about them. You will have no difficulty in distinguishing between these two kinds of points.

(1) *Fatigue*. Fatigue follows long periods of strenuous activity, but true fatigue should be distinguished from boredom. Students often think that they are fatigued by their schoolwork when actually they are only bored and uninterested.

Two items about fatigue are of special importance. First, since fatigue is produced by muscular and nervous overactivity, action in strenuous work and sports should be reduced to a minimum. In certain occupations, for example, experts have used slow-motion pictures to find the

most efficient way to perform the necessary operations. If you are curious about the extent to which this study has been carried in sports, ask a successful football or basketball coach. Second, fatigue should not be allowed to proceed too far. It is true that the human body has reserves, both mechanical and chemical. But these reserves should not be drawn upon too heavily. If they are, permanent injury may result. This point is especially important for young persons.

(2) *Incorrect nourishment.* Our bodies require fuel to operate. This fuel must be of the right kind and amount. You have noticed that filling stations have different kinds of gasoline. Most cars will run on any of these kinds of fuel, but they do not run equally well on all of them. Our bodies react to different kinds of fuel in much the same way. Physical health is improved when the body gets the right kind and amount of fuel. Small boys who feast on green apples sometimes find that they have eaten both the wrong kind and the wrong amount of food. The adult who is overweight realizes that an oversupply of starches and sugars leads to trouble. Diet programs are available from the United States Government, public libraries, insurance companies, and your family physician. Four things should be noted in connection with adjustment to food. First, many people, perhaps most people, eat too rapidly. Anyone who has studied the progress of food after it enters the human body knows the paramount importance of this point. Most people do not think of food as being digested partially in the mouth, and it is true that some foods are not affected very much by the secretion of the salivary glands. But others, particularly starches and sugars, begin their extensive alterations there. Furthermore hasty eating allows large unbroken pieces of

food to be swallowed and thus increases the task of digestion. One purpose of slow eating, then, is to reduce the digestive work of your body.

Second, unpleasant excitement and strain affect digestion. Recent investigations have shown that the pylorus or outlet of the stomach is very sensitive to our emotions. When the pylorus contracts, food cannot progress naturally; instead the food is "banked up in the stomach, the organ (stomach) remains awash and the sensation of heaviness, distension and acid risings result."<sup>1</sup> Therefore we should dine under pleasant conditions that help us to relax.

Third, certain kinds of foods seem hard for the system to digest. If fried foods do not head the list, they come near the top. Overindulgence in starches and sugars comes also under this heading. In addition certain people are unable to assimilate well certain kinds of food. They are said to have an "idiosyncrasy" for these foods; that is, they have difficulty in digesting them or are made ill by them, even though most persons find these foods to be perfectly wholesome.

Fourth, the amount of food that people eat should be mentioned. Somebody has said that you will always be healthy if you always leave the table when you are still hungry. This is not a bad rule. Moreover modern civilization has resulted in the production of many highly concentrated foods. Eaten in incorrect amounts, they are difficult for our bodies to use.

(3) *Glandular disorders.* Most of you have seen pictures of human giants and dwarfs. Both may be the results of the wrong working of some gland in the body. But what

<sup>1</sup> Todd, Dr. T. Wingate, "The Stomach as an Organ of Social Adjustment," *Scientific Monthly*, October, 1936.

is a gland? To state it simply, glands are body organs that produce chemical products which usually affect many other parts of the body as well as other glands. Some glands have a passage leading to the surface of the body. Tears come from such glands. Other glands produce their juices or fluids and pour them directly into the blood. The adrenal gland, for example, pours its secretion into the blood stream—as an accompaniment of anger. Dwarfs and giants may be victims of abnormalities of the pituitary gland. The jumpy, jittery, nervous type of person is overstimulated usually by the thyroid gland, while the slow, sluggish, always-tired person frequently has an underactive thyroid.

The subject of glands is one of those to which we referred when we said that expert advice was needed before you could do anything about them. It is well to know, however, that a feeling of maladjustment which defies your own efforts at treatment through diet and similar approaches, may often be remedied by a physician who understands glandular disorders. No field of medicine has made greater progress during recent years than the treatment of glandular disorders.

(4) *Chronic toxemia*. “What is that?” you ask. It is not so difficult to understand as it sounds. *Toxemia* means poisoning, and *chronic* means that it goes on all the time. So a person with chronic toxemia is the victim of persistent poisoning.

Chronic toxemia usually comes from what is known as a “low-grade” infection. A low-grade infection is one that is slow but lingering. Certain kinds of germs which are really unfriendly to human beings seem to be very lazy. Other kinds of germs are energetic and do their work violently and rapidly. If you are tired all the time or

if you have persistent headaches or backaches, one of the causes may be chronic toxemia from local infection. Such infections may occur in many places, such as the tonsils, teeth, sinuses, and so on.

As chronic toxemia is frequently too mild to cause immediate incapacity, many people pay no attention to it. This is a mistake. As resistance is lowered, the toxemia is likely to flare up and cause much more damage than it would have if checked early. A periodic examination by your physician will check most, though not all, cases of it.

(5) *Overwork*. Not much need be said on this topic, because it is related closely to fatigue. Most people do not overwork. Those who do are usually careless or uninformed about the effect of overwork, or deeply interested in reaching a difficult goal. Overwork demands its compensation. There is no need to deceive ourselves about this matter. Before anyone overworks, he should know that although he may gain a temporary advantage, he will pay for it in the long run.

(6) *Alcohol, tobacco, and narcotic drugs*. There was a time in this country when very few women smoked. A woman who did was denounced by almost everyone. This is not so true today. A few years ago the drinking of alcohol was illegal. Now it is legal. Whether we approve or not, it is just as legitimate in most places in the United States today to drink beer as it is to drink milk. Narcotic drugs have always been outlawed in this country, unless prescribed by physicians.

Our interest in alcohol, tobacco, and narcotic drugs in a chapter on physical hygiene does not concern their legality, but their physiological and social effects. Since reputable authorities maintain that all three are poisonous, the only question remaining is about the quantity neces-

sary to cause serious results. We need not cite elaborate experimental evidence, although it abounds, to prove that *all are poisonous when consumed in quantities sufficient to produce the results which most people expect from alcohol, tobacco, and narcotic drugs*. Furthermore one of the most dangerous and insidious features of all three is the subtle way in which they gain control over the organism. No person who is not unduly excited about the terrible effects of liquor, for example, can fail to grant that it produces a feeling of well-being or happiness known as euphoria. The amount required to produce this effect varies with individuals, and in some cases it is not excessive. The danger comes from the habit-forming element. Therefore temperance with alcohol and tobacco is difficult because of their allurements for many people. The insidious qualities of narcotic drugs are even more deceptive.

Few comments need be made concerning the effects of alcohol, tobacco, and narcotic drugs on physical health. In considering these effects, we should recall that the wrong kind of food, or food taken in the wrong quantities, is dangerous also. In earlier times, more often than now, there was more than one instance of a person who spent much of his time fighting alcohol and tobacco, and who died from stupid, ignorant, and poisonous gluttony. A person who really desires physical health avoids every kind of intemperance and poison. The number of people who are genuine inebriates is small. Many persons pay dearly for the slight pleasure which they get from their tobacco and liquor. The case is indefensible enough for the person who derives even temporary satisfaction from his smoking and drinking: It is utterly indefensible for the person who derives little or none.

One of our most serious public problems arises from the

use of alcohol, tobacco, and narcotic drugs. The decline of a man's social responsibility after his drinking whisky is shown in the following table:<sup>1</sup>

| Test                                 | Sober | 3 Drinks | 6 Drinks |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----------|----------|
| Keeness of Vision .....              | B     | B        | B        |
| Judgment of Distance.....            | B     | C        | D        |
| Side Vision .....                    | B     | C        | C        |
| Muscular Balance of Eyes.....        | B     | C        | C        |
| Ability to See Despite Glare.....    | B     | C        | C—       |
| Color Blindness.....                 | A     | B        | B        |
| Eye Dominance (eye co-ordination) .. | O. K. | Failed   | Failed   |
| Quickness of Action.....             | B     | C        | E        |
| Reaction to Emergency.....           | B     | 15% Less | 40% Less |

Blood pressure increased fifteen points between sober and six drinks; pulse increased fourteen points.

The man whose record is shown in this table is a capable driver when sober. He submitted to tests to determine the effect of alcohol on a motorist. His three tests were taken "when he was sober, after he had three two-ounce drinks of whisky, and after he had six two-ounce drinks of whisky. . . In a period of two hours [he] took six Scotch and sodas, and while he did not appear to be under the influence of liquor, the testing machines showed that he had completely lost that alertness, judgment, and ability to react to emergency which is the margin of difference between safe driving and reckless driving . . . Most affected by his six highballs were his judgment of distance, his reaction to emergency, his quickness of action, and his ability to see despite glare. In eye dominance, the co-ordination of the right and left eyes, he completely failed. And yet, when sober, he passed the test successfully."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, August 6, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

The effect of tobacco on the smoker himself is not like that of alcohol. The chief public problem arising from smoking is that some smokers are careless. In states having large forests, laws forbidding or regulating smoking in forest areas have been passed. The same states and many others have attempted by legislation to protect other property against the carelessness of smokers. Even with these public regulations, hundreds of feet of newspaper space are filled annually with records of fires started by thoughtless smokers.

Narcotic drugs have the most appalling consequences for their few victims. Besides resulting in the complete downfall of the addicts themselves, the use of such drugs leads to the most dastardly crimes. The social difficulty connected with the drug habit is that many addicts lose their sense of right and wrong and their sense of safety and danger. Everyone else, however, agrees that a person who is blind to the ill effects of personal degradation, callous to the results of crime, and fearless of danger to himself is a social menace. Therefore the civilized world is armed by legislation and with G-men in a war against traffic in narcotic drugs.

(7) *Haste*. An outstanding characteristic of modern civilization is speed. Mechanical improvements in methods of communication and transportation have increased greatly the tempo of modern life. The ordinary routine of living is far more rapid than it has been at any previous time. The relation of this change to physical hygiene is apparent. If you drive a machine rapidly all the time, it wears out quickly. If you drive the human machine the same way, it wears out quickly, likewise. Heart disease, nervous breakdown, and fatigue are some of the most common consequences of the pace of life today.



Some of this haste and rush seems unavoidable. It is part of the very warp and woof of modern civilization. But much of it can be avoided. The habit of rushing everything has become too deeply ingrained in us. Computations of the amount of time saved by speeding automobile drivers, for instance, are striking examples of the utter uselessness of some of our speed. People whose time is not particularly valuable rush wildly from one place to another at imminent risk to their necks, in order to save, we are told by experts who have figured it out, from ten to twenty minutes a day for all their trouble. The number of accidents in large cities is ample evidence of the price that is paid. A fireman has to hurry in getting to a fire. Doctors should hurry to an emergency operation. But why should John Jones, out for a Sunday afternoon pleasure trip, drive at sixty miles an hour? An intelligent study of the problem of haste would be a blessing to humanity. The time has long since passed when all parts of our society moved slowly and leisurely. Production in industrial plants has been accelerated and probably will remain so. Certain kinds of travel must be rapid, too, but it is still possible for many people, frequently and with considerable profit, to take a little more time.

#### 4. HEALTH HABITS

(1) *Sleep and relaxation.* When we drive an automobile on a long, steep grade, the engine sometimes overheats and boils over. Then the only thing to do is to stop and let it cool. To this extent we may say that the machine "rests." But the machine cannot relax. The kind of rest that comes from relaxation is found only in living tissue

Probably the most beneficial and most nearly complete form of relaxation is sleep. Interesting experiments have been performed by people who have tried to see how long they could do without sleep. The amount of sleep needed by different persons varies. The average person, however, is likely to be exhausted if he goes one complete night without any sleep. We know further from our own experience that a short period of quiet, undisturbed sleep is more restful than a long period of troubled sleep.

While most of us do not have to learn how to sleep, correct relaxation is a real art. Relaxation is not so simple a matter that all it requires is for us to sit down and do it. For one thing there are many muscle groups in the human body, and any relaxation that even approaches completeness involves releasing the tension in these muscle groups.<sup>1</sup>

After one has the necessary technical knowledge about correct relaxation, the next step is practice until relaxation becomes a habit. Let us consider again the problem of driving an automobile. You have watched many people drive their cars. Some sit stiffly at the wheel grasping it as if they expected it to run away, using many more muscle groups than are necessary for efficient driving. Their tenseness shows that they are making hard work of driving, but it does not show that they are driving efficiently. Watch the expert drive. He sits relaxed in the seat and uses only the energy necessary to manipulate the car correctly. True, his eyes are likely to be just as attentively focused on the road as those of the driver who is tense. But he is not engaged in what driving teachers call "fighting the wheel." Instead he practices both relaxation and

<sup>1</sup> If you are interested in relaxation, read Edmund Jacobson's book *You Must Relax* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1934).

control. Not only is it advantageous to practice both relaxation and control during muscular activity, but it is well also to form the habit of doing nothing except relaxing at as frequent periods during the day as may be convenient. One of the criticisms of certain large factories is that the "speed-up" policy compels the workers to be in a state of constant tension from the time they begin work until they finish. Probably this condition is disadvantageous even to the employers, for it leads to an increased number of accidents and to lowered efficiency after a period of time. Many large factories allow several relaxation periods during the day. The argument that such periods are unnecessary and wasteful is not based on facts.

(2) *Correct work-play rhythm.* What we have just said about relaxation leads naturally to the topic of the importance of a correct alternation of work and play. It is not so much the amount of work that one does over a period of time which causes good or bad results as it is the way in which one alternates one's work with recreation. Much attention is being given at present to leisure activities and play.

(3) *Periodic visits to dentists and doctors.* This point has been mentioned before, but its importance justifies repetition. Many people do not visit the doctor until there is something definitely wrong with them. Many times, then, it is too late for him to do nearly as much good as he could have done at an earlier preventive visit. Hygiene can be made largely a matter of prevention. Let us compare ourselves in this connection with a transcontinental air liner. The cruisers of the sky, which, all things considered, crash surprisingly seldom, are checked over carefully and regularly. There is a sixty-hour check, a one-hundred-and-twenty-hour check (that is, checks after sixty and after

one hundred and twenty hours of flying time), and many other supplementary checks. The reason for them is obvious. It is that those in charge of commercial flying do not dare and do not wish to wait until a defect develops before taking care of it. Regular visits to a physician serve exactly the same purpose with us.

(4) *Understanding of life periods.* Shakespeare said that there were seven ages of man. This may not be true biologically, but we all know that there are several life periods, each having its own characteristics. The study and understanding of one's life periods are of value in hygiene. The following life periods are fairly well marked:

a. An early period of infancy and growth in which the individual gains in both size and bulk and is rather vegetative in his life. This time of life is characterized by childhood diseases, but in general, vitality is high and resistance is good.

b. Adolescence or change. This time of life represents the transition from childhood to adulthood. It is marked by many physiological changes, including the development of secondary sex characteristics and changes in physique, personality, and ways of thought.

c. Maturity. This rather long period, with several sub-periods, extends from about the age of 17 or 18 to 60 or 70. Its duration differs among different individuals.

d. Senility. This is the period of old age when the machine is running down and the actions are slower.

We have said already that one's total life efficiency depends on knowledge, care, and thoughtfulness in the early period. To these must be added the intelligent study, not only of the characteristics of a given time of life in general, but of one's own self in particular. The changes which boys undergo at adolescence, for example, are far different

from those which girls undergo. This is true both physiologically and mentally. It should be recognized by the individuals themselves as well as by their teachers and friends. And yet it frequently is not. Women pass through a very difficult period in late maturity. This period is marked often by extremely high nervous tension and numerous bodily changes as well. Many young people would be more kindly in their reactions to their mothers if they realized what is involved at this particular period. There is no reason why they should not know about it.

Study yourself intelligently. Try to ask intelligent questions of your parents about your problems. If they are unable to answer the questions, talk with your family physician. Knowledge in itself is not a protection, but ignorance is far worse. Of course you know that our society has certain conventions about the discussion of sex topics. Nevertheless an intelligent inquiry about life problems is important. The medical man would say, "Cut directly across these conventions and banish false modesty."

(5) *Regularity*. One of the great conservers of human energy is regularity of habits. Even animals dislike irregularity. The dog that has been taught to eat at a certain time is likely to become restless and howl if it is not fed. Some people are better situated than others to follow regular habits and thus promote systematic bodily care. In so far as we can, we should all do so.

(6) *Exercise*. Hygienists hold that exercise promotes health in five ways. First, exercise arouses a tingle of energy that brings new vigor and enjoyment. It is a form of recreation for most people. Sports, hiking, and other physical play are believed, therefore, to be essential in any health program.

Second, exercise increases respiration. Hence you can

increase your supply of oxygen by exercising in fresh air.

Third, exercise affects the circulation of the blood. In this way moderate exercise seems to have value for everyone. By increasing the supply of oxygen and by stimulating the circulation of the blood, exercise aids in developing and maintaining bodily vigor.

Fourth, exercise is a special corrective for people who have certain disabilities. Well-planned exercise assists in the development of certain groups of muscles by increasing the supply of blood to them and by stimulating the nerves that direct them. Swimming, for example, seems to be especially helpful for many victims of infantile paralysis. Well-planned exercise also corrects certain defects in posture. Bowling has been used successfully for the correction of spinal curvature. When so used, bowling is a straightener, because it pulls the spine toward its normal position. Corrective exercise should, however, be directed by an expert in physical hygiene; otherwise it may lead to a new posture defect. Such a situation developed in a startling way when a right-handed person used left-handed bowling to correct her curvature—she continued the “corrective” so long that she developed a new curvature in the opposite direction. In spite of such unusual cases, however, exercise is a corrective for many people who are unaware of its exact value.

Fifth, every time you move a muscle, you increase your supply of lactic acid. Although lactic acid is still regarded by many as only a waste product, scientists such as Pasteur have believed that this acid is Nature’s own antiseptic and that it defends our bodies against intestinal toxins. More recently, since 1930, other eminent scientists have found evidence that the action of lactic acid assists in maintain-

ing health. Boris Sokoloff, in his book *Vitality*,<sup>1</sup> describes some of the fascinating investigations of lactic acid now going on in American and European university laboratories. If these investigations continue to add evidence about the value of this acid, we may discover thereby a new value for exercise.

We arrive, then, at a general principle: Moderate, well-planned exercise is both enjoyable and healthful. Most young people exercise enough. One problem is that of keeping them from overexercising. You probably know high school athletes who want to participate in four or five major sports at once. You probably also know "exercise fiends," particularly men in their late forties and their fifties, who entirely overdo their exercise. Another problem is that of encouraging certain people who are overweight or physically indolent to exercise more. Moderation in exercise is the solution for both of these problems.

## 5. THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HYGIENE

Do you ever have "blue" days—days when the whole world seems wrong to you? If you do, there is no reason to be greatly disturbed about the matter, because there are few people whose tranquillity prevents temporary despondence. But let us examine those "blue spells." Is there always a sufficient reason for them? Are people discouraged only when ill, injured, or disappointed? "No," you say, and of course you are right. Sometimes low morale seems almost without a cause. But when we examine closely our own low spirits, we often find causes that were not apparent at first glance.

The person who is beaten and bedraggled mentally is

<sup>1</sup> E. P. Dutton and Company, 1934.

not at his highest efficiency. Otherwise why should a football coach be so anxious about the mental attitude of his men? Why does a general in the army attempt to keep the spirits of his soldiers high? For the simple reason that a healthy mind is as necessary to the athlete or soldier as a healthy body. Many a man has been beaten by the world, not because he lacked physical equipment for success but because he had a faulty mental attitude. The "will to win," which we sometimes hear mentioned as a desirable trait, is one way of describing the type of mental attitude necessary for successful living.

How, then, can we define or describe mental hygiene? *Mental hygiene is a system of principles for enabling a person to do his best as far as his mental condition is concerned.* It helps him achieve a conscious condition wherein mental and physical functions work together harmoniously, leading to a feeling of completeness and satisfaction. Mental health underlies personality, coloring all our activities and the effects that we have upon other people and ourselves. But these definitions do not tell the whole story. They do not tell, for example, how to practice the thing defined. We may describe money as that which will buy something, but still we may have no money! What we are all interested in is how to get the money. Similarly we are interested in knowing how to practice mental hygiene. The following pages will present practical counsel for the attainment of mental health.

## 6. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HYGIENE

"Strong in the back, weak in the head," goes the old saying. How correct is it? Certainly some truth resides in



this not too complimentary remark about the strong-backed. Otherwise the physical giant would be also the mental giant—the most courageous, the most wholesome in attitude, the clearest in thinking, and so on. This, we know, is not generally the case. Yet neither is the opposite; the strongest of men physically are not usually the weakest mentally. Furthermore a wise man once said, “In the sound [healthy] body, there is a sound mind.” That some relationship exists between soundness of body and soundness of mind, no one can deny. Our ideal should be the best possible mind in the best possible body.

Therefore one of the first rules to set for ourselves in trying to develop a powerful and well-balanced mind is the achievement of physical health, which we have discussed earlier in this chapter. This rule is not the whole story, but it is the necessary beginning.

Now about this “sound body”—what is it? Big muscles? Great chest expansion? Good wind? All these things are worth having, but there is no reason why the person who lacks them should be unduly disturbed. The athlete is an admirable person, but he will be harmed by poor hygiene habits as quickly as, sometimes more quickly than, the ordinary person. Sound health, physical and mental, depends on knowledge, habits, and attitudes that any normal person can acquire. Some of the keys to health are the following:

1. Knowledge of the roads to strength, vigor, and health
2. Willingness to practice faithfully health habits based on such knowledge
3. Knowledge of one's personal limitations
4. Willingness to sacrifice temporary pleasure to insure permanent health

We may say, then, that there is a definite relationship between physical and mental hygiene. The earlier sections of this chapter should, therefore, be studied in connection with these sections on mental hygiene. Furthermore the physical hygiene on which mental hygiene depends is not a possession of the athletic few; it is available to all intelligent, willing, and conscientious persons.

## 7. ENEMIES OF MENTAL HEALTH

To win a battle, a man should know his enemy. To win mental health and to keep it, one should know the enemies of mental health. Fortunately it often is possible to trace the history of mental illness as readily as it is to recognize the cherries-milk-dill-pickles-green-apple-ice-cream combination as the cause of our physical illness. And the remedy is just as simple! Consider, for instance, the man who knows that he loses his temper easily, but who makes no effort to control it. He is treating himself to a mental illness every time he indulges in a fit of anger.

When we speak of temper as well as appetite as a trouble-causing condition, we are assuming that control is possible. People are not all agreed about the amount of "control" or choice that a human being has. For the purpose of our discussion, however, we assume that everyone has sufficient control over himself to avoid eating either mental or physical green apples, especially after he has found out that green apples are disturbing.

We are now ready to look at some of the mental green apples. As you read of them, think about yourself. Whenever the case fits you, pay particular attention to any suggestion given. Here are our mental green apples:

(1) *Fear*. Few people can say truthfully that they have

never feared many things, though psychologists tell us that the newborn baby is afraid of few things. How, then, can we account for young children's fear of many objects or situations? Of course many fears come from learning. The fact that we learn to be afraid of certain things makes a great difference in the practical affairs of life. If all fears were inherited, as indeed some fears seem to be, then we could merely try to control them as well as possible. Since we find, however, by noticing the differing objects that people fear, that many fears are learned, the most obvious remedy for us is to avoid learning them. Even after a fear has been learned, however, we need not be cursed with it for life. A fear, like any other faulty learning, can be overcome by learning a new reaction, although this learning and relearning takes more time than would correct learning from the start.

Let us assume that some fears have been learned. How can you learn not to be afraid of something which you have learned to fear? A psychologist sought the answer to this problem in an experiment he tried on a small child who had learned to be afraid of dogs. Whenever it saw a dog, the child cried and tried to get away. But the child was fond of candy. The psychologist brought both a dog and a box of candy into the same room. Whenever he saw that the child was about to cry as the dog came near, he showed the candy and offered it to the child. Presently the child was eating the candy and patting the dog. This shows that fear can be overcome sometimes by providing a pleasant situation that is more powerful than the fear itself. You can probably think of other examples.

In learning not to be afraid, you must recognize the outstanding elements in fear. These are, first, a strong emotion, second, a tendency to get away from the object

which is causing the fear, and third, an effort to pacify the object or person causing the fear. Some of the commonest fears are fear of the unknown, fear of death and disease, fear caused by lack of a sense of security, and fear of social disapproval. In trying to re-educate yourself or anyone else, remember that the process must often be a gradual one. If you are trying to learn to dive off a springboard, one way to do it is to go up thirty or forty feet and take a chance—and hope that if you survive you will never again be afraid. A much better method, especially for timid people, is to jump off a springboard from varying heights, beginning low. This is the principle upon which all overcoming of fear is based.

(2) *Conflict*. There are mental as well as physical conflicts. Suppose that you wish to go to a theater some evening and you are told by your parents that you cannot. A conflict is likely to arise between your desire to go and the combination of fear of and respect for your parents' wishes. Conflict is almost unavoidable, human nature and affairs being as they are. But many persons allow much unnecessary conflict to enter their lives. Besides, the settling of a mental conflict, once it arrives, is uncertain and often disastrous.

Conflict is keenest when the elements producing it are almost equally balanced. Referring to our example of the individual's wishing to go to the theater, we note that if he is much in awe of his parents, that fact is likely to settle the issue and end the conflict. If he knows that his parents are fairly easygoing and not likely to punish him severely, the same is true. When, however, the objects causing conflict are almost evenly balanced, the decision and the solution are not nearly so simple. In situations of that kind, people have remained in a state of conflict for years. Take

the example of a man who likes one type of work, but can make more money in some other work. This often produces conflict, and occasionally he will change back and forth three or four times and never finally make up his mind. Another example of conflict arising from nearly equal desires is the case of the donkey that starved to death between two bales of hay because it could not decide which one to eat first. Well-meaning but over-cautious people have been known to remain unmarried because of the same state of mind.

Conflict can be conquered by either of two excellent ways. Of course you will realize that in dealing with any of these enemies of mental health, you often are forced to choose the lesser of two evils. The fact that the conflict is avoided by the selection of one or another of the ways offered does not mean that the solution is always the best one or the choice the wisest. In the long run, however, the advantages which come from overcoming the disastrous physical and mental effects of the conflict will more than balance the account.

The first of our methods of doing away with conflict, then, is to form the habit of making a definite choice between two possibilities that are being considered. This method, of course, can be overdone in the direction of snap judgments, but except for this extreme, it is a good one. At various points in this book emphasis has been placed upon the importance of habit in man's conduct. Here we have another example of the significance of habit.

The second technique, one that is especially helpful in assisting others to solve a conflict situation, consists of adding enough weight to one of the alternatives to cause it to predominate. Take the case of the salesman trying to sell a new car to a person who is undecided between two

cars. What does the salesman do? He makes a definite effort to have his car appear the better and he often searches industriously to discover every possible inducement that may influence prospective owners. Many times it is possible to introduce into a situation an element that will definitely turn a decision one way or the other, to someone's great relief.

(3) *Worry*. Worry is frequently the result of conflict. Worry is a disorganized emotional condition that leads to no particular result except itself, and it consumes a great deal of energy. Worry can be dispelled in much the same manner as conflict. Almost identical rules apply. However one special point about worry should be noted. It is this: Many people form the habit of thinking unnecessarily about trivial things. When we spoke of habit and its beneficial effect in banishing mental conflict, we did not mean to give you the idea that habit is necessarily your friend. As was said in a previous chapter, it can be either your enemy or your friend. If habit leads you to worry about trivial situations, habit becomes your enemy. The best cure for worry is interest in something that you can do successfully.

(4) *Self-delusion*. How long has it been since someone has said to you, "Oh, you're just kidding yourself." Do you understand what people mean when they say that? You need not be an expert in mental hygiene to know. Let us look a little more closely at this matter of "kidding" oneself, or self-delusion, as we prefer to call it.

To begin with, self-analysis is not a fault. We urge you to examine yourself, or rather your own conduct, with a view to improving. But self-analysis may be both exaggerated and distorted, and then it is no longer impersonal self-evaluation for the purpose of improving conduct, but

brooding abstraction that interferes with conduct. Our first recommendation concerning self-delusion is this: Whenever self-analysis leads to brooding, it is self-delusion and should be stopped.

Self-delusion usually expresses itself in one of three directions. First, there is self-condemnation. The person who condemns himself takes the blame for everything, whether or not he is actually responsible. Often he has an inferiority complex and feels that he can never do anything successfully. Self-condemnation is a misuse of the healthy habit of being willing to recognize our own faults and trying to alter them. Second, there is self-pity. Hundreds of people spend much of their time feeling sorry for themselves. Such a notion is also called the "martyr complex." Usually self-pitying people lack something to do. One of the best ways to remedy this situation is to give the person definite tasks to perform. Third, there is self-expansion. Self-expansion in one of its phases is called conceit. Undue self-expansion should not be confused with self-confidence, which is a desirable trait. When self-expansion is carried to an extreme, it is called insanity and is characterized by delusions of grandeur. Desirable self-expansion is an intellectual appraisal of one's own ability and the determination to use it in a worth-while pursuit. The person who knows his own ability and recognizes it is not open to criticism. The principal difference between desirable self-confidence and the type of self-expansion that eventually may lead one to think that he is a Napoleon, is the absence of accurate intellectual evaluation in self-analysis. Sometimes, however, it is compensation for a social injury or for a deficiency that one feels.

The best way to combat self-expansion is to encourage criticisms by others of your own conduct, personality, and

character traits. Self-evaluation is a perfectly good thing, but it is subject to many errors that are unavoidable. One of these errors is the inescapable human tendency to think too well of oneself.

(5) *Lack of work.* "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," the saying goes. But all play and no work makes Jack a nuisance to himself and to everybody around him. Many times you hear someone wish that he had enough money so that he would never have to work and could always spend his time doing anything that he wanted to do. But look at the newspapers and find out the troubles and difficulties besetting those who try to fill their lives with nothing but play. Most of them are far less happy than individuals who are forced to mix their work and play. One of the best-known "playboys" in the world once said that it doesn't take very long for play to become work.

The basis of all mental health lies in three things: a plan in life, a task to do, and freedom in doing it. This prescription emphasizes as its central point the idea of work. We are not doing anyone a favor by assisting him to get out of doing a reasonable amount of work in terms of his own capacity. If you believe this, you should assume responsibility gladly. Some of the happiest people in the world, those with the best mental health, seek tasks to perform instead of waiting for someone to force tasks upon them.

(6) *Crime and conscience.* If you remember our chapter on manners and morals you will recall that the point was made that some things which are approved at one time and place are not approved at another time and place. In fact we might go almost as far as to say that the definition of what a crime is depends on time and place. It is not our purpose here to try to find out whether or not



some things have always been considered crimes by all people and always will be but to deal rather with those lesser social crimes which are the enemies of mental health. It is a common saying, especially among people who think in terms of religion, that one of the principal punishments of crime is the effect of conscience.

The word conscience is understood differently by different people. There are almost as many different kinds of consciences as there are kinds of people. But there is a reality underlying the notion of conscience. This reality can be expressed in terms of a principle which we have already discussed; namely, the principle of conflict. Both law and religion emphasize in crime the elements of "awareness" on the part of the individual who commits the offense—that is, he must know what he is doing. This being the case, the individual is also aware that his action is likely to lead to counter action on the part of society. Regardless of what conscience may contain in the way of mystical or spiritual elements, there is no question that it contains a strong element of conflict. The conflict is between our desire for mental ease and our fear that detection of the crime, whatever it may be, will upset this ease. An obvious remedy, of course, is strict conformity. As a solution this is not satisfactory to most people, and even those who accept it often make unintended mistakes which lead to unfavorable social results. The proper disposal of the conscience type of conflict is exactly the same as that of the others. If you feel a sense of blame, you should make an objective judgment of the situation where this is possible. Then, if you decide that your conduct has been wrong, you should make every effort to remedy it and then dismiss the matter completely from your mind.

(7) *Uncertainty.* Uncertainty, or fear of the unknown, is

one of the oldest of man's mental enemies. We find that among primitive peoples it results in all manner of efforts to make peace with the unknown, and even in modern civilization there are many examples of man's dislike and fear of that which is not understood. Modern science has done much to make clear to us that the unknown contains nothing that need be feared.

Uncertainty is especially destructive of mental health. Many people would rather have bad news than no news. There is a definite advantage in certainty. For one thing it enables us to know the situation with which we have to cope. Of course if the situation is hopeless, certain knowledge is of no help to mental health. For this reason physicians dealing with hopeless diseases follow the practice of not telling the patient his real condition. But this is the exception and not the rule. Usually certainty is to be preferred to uncertainty, because it gives us a tangible situation with which to deal.

(8) *Some early habits.* In some respects the world of the child is the world of the adult, and the behavior which the child learns is useful in the adult world. It is just as valuable, for example, for the adult as for the child to know of the burning qualities of stoves. But many techniques that the child develops have no value at a later time; instead they bring the person who uses them into needless conflict, especially with his social environment. For instance the child cries when he desires something and his cries receive attention, because they are the natural way in which an infant makes his wishes known. If this technique is retained too far into adulthood, it loses its usefulness and makes the person who practices it an annoyance to others. In addition to habits which were once useful to the child but which have lost their value, there

are childhood habits which have value neither to the child nor to the adult. Tantrums or fits of temper are an example of this.

(9) *Suspicion*. Suspicion can be described as a feeling of uneasiness which prompts one to study too closely any person or situation, usually with the intent of discovering something unfriendly to oneself. It could hardly be said that the totally unsuspecting person will have a happy time in the world as it exists in the twentieth century. There is too much sham, too much deception, and too much sharp business practice for the completely naïve person to succeed. However even though we admit that the habit of keeping one's eyes open is a good one, it must be conceded that undue suspicion, either of situations or of people, creates much mental conflict and unnecessary concern. Our thought here is not so much the fact that thinking evil of other people is wrong as that mental health is impaired by such continued apprehension.

Since we have just said that neither blind faith nor unreasoning suspicion is a good guide to conduct, it seems important to state some principles by which the actions of others can be judged. The following may prove helpful: (a) Do not suspect people of harmful designs unless there is some reasonably definite action on which to base the suspicion; (b) when you have just cause for thinking that people feel unfriendly toward you, a direct attack on the situation will often save difficulty—many serious disagreements begin as mild misunderstandings; and (c) recognize differences in the significance which the same act may have in different people.

(10) *Laziness*. Laziness is a mental habit as well as a physical one. It would be hard to tell which is the worse, mental or physical laziness. Mental sloth is not charac-

teristic only of the mentally dull. Bright people are just as likely to be lazy mentally as the less bright. One of the dangers of mental laziness is that it grows and feeds upon itself.

The best remedy for mental laziness is the formation of the habit of beginning tasks promptly. Usually once one has begun work, continuance is easy. The causes of mental laziness are principally two. First, there is the physical cause. It is hardly fair to say that a person is mentally lazy if he is physically incapable of work. Therefore one of the first things that should be done if one is tired continually is to have a physical examination. A second cause of mental laziness has been mentioned previously: No amount of attention to one's physical condition can cure a person of laziness if he has adopted the philosophy of never doing today what can be put off until tomorrow.

## 8. FRIENDS OF MENTAL HEALTH

(1) *Facing reality.* Experts on mental health unanimously agree that facing reality is of great importance in keeping the mind sound. To be sure reality becomes annoying and tiring at times. All of us like to treat ourselves to flights into the realms of fantasy or fiction. These flights are not harmful; indeed they are beneficial if they possess certain qualifications. One such qualification is that a person should not get into the habit of dwelling more in the realm of fantasy than in the realm of reality. Another qualification is that the fantasy should not be mistaken for the reality. Whenever a person reaches the point where he is actually unable to tell what is real and what is not, he is insane.

*Facing the realities of the world does not exclude religious belief. Instead religion as a form of human adjustment is one of the world's realities.* The relative merits of various religious creeds and sects is no concern of ours here, but there is nothing to keep anyone from being a realist and at the same time possessing a religious faith.

Adjustment to reality should not take the form of fighting it unnecessarily. It should not take the form of wild criticisms. Even speculations of undue length as to why things should be as they are yield profit only to the philosophically minded. Many people who would never dream of attempting to defy the law of gravity by trying to jump off the earth straight up into the air, spend time trying to do things just as foolish in the realm of social reality. There is no more point in disorganized protest against the facts of human nature than there is in protest against the facts of gravity. The effects of gravity can be offset in certain ways only through an understanding of it. For thousands of years man could do nothing about gravity except obey its downward pull. Eventually, however, he found a way to get off the earth and up into the air. It was done by facing things as they are and by attempting to counterbalance an undesirable reality in realistic fashion. Facing reality in dealing with people involves the same procedure.

When we say that human nature, like gravity, has certain fixed characteristics, we are not surrendering ourselves to "fate," except in a limited sense. We must start, of course, with certain relatively fixed qualities such as the characteristics of protoplasm previously discussed. To attempt to change those characteristics would be worse than useless. But once we accept the basic reality, the adjustments that we can make are numerous and far-

reaching. Only, however, by recognizing and knowing the original situation with which we are dealing can such progress be made.

(2) *Self-honesty*. In discussing enemies of mental health, we mentioned self-delusion and some of its dangers. Its opposite is self-honesty. Self-honesty is that admirable trait which enables a person to view himself realistically and without posing in a psychological mirror. Hard enough for most people to practice at its best, it is a most valuable asset when once acquired. Self-honesty is more an attitude than anything else. Once there is the desire to know real facts about oneself and to improve where improvement is possible, the checking of shortcomings is often easy.

(3) *Self-confidence*. Did you ever watch a championship football team trot out on the field? How confident they were! Every movement carried assurance, and every gesture indicated self-possession. Coaches realize that a self-confident, winning team has a definite psychological advantage. This advantage is over and above the sheer physical skill which the men possess.

The person who has no confidence in himself is usually beaten before the game has even begun. Decisive, clean-cut action, whether it is in a golf stroke or giving a public speech, is not the result of a shaky internal attitude. It is the result rather of a definite feeling that the job at hand is thoroughly within one's ability to perform. The main difference between a mob and an army, aside from the training and equipment which an army possesses, is in the collective confidence of the army.

Nor is the gifted person the most confident in all cases. Many a person of mediocre qualifications has succeeded better in both problem solving and acquiring skill, because

of two factors—perseverance and self-confidence. Confidence, of course, is definitely related to success in any line. This has been mentioned previously. If you wish to build up self-confidence in some direction in which you do not have it, the procedure to follow is quite simple. Choose for yourself a task which you feel is definitely within your ability to perform. Do it as well as you can. The feeling of success which you will get in being able to do something will then assist you to attack a job that is a little harder. Keep on adding in this way until you have reached a level that satisfies you. Secure the criticisms of others about your tasks.

(4) *Tolerance*. Tolerance does not mean willingness to endure everything. It does not mean being an easy mark. But it does mean being willing to see the other person's point of view and to consider, without uneasiness, ways of doing things different from those to which you are accustomed. A tolerant attitude will help you to avoid mental discord. It will enable you to get along with people and to avoid unnecessary conflicts with them. The development of tolerance is largely an exercise in social experimentation. One outstanding characteristic of low orders of civilization is that the people in them are likely to think that their way of doing things is the only one which is at all permissible. As we have seen, in even so lowly a matter as eating habits, it is not uncommon to hear jests about others whose habits are a little different from ours. Instead of making fun of his methods of doing things, why not try to do them as the nonconformist does, just to see whether or not his way will work? An attitude of tolerance leads to co-operation and friendliness on the part of the person whose unfamiliar procedures are tolerated, rather than the resentment which would result from ridicule.

(5) *Balance*. Mental balance enables us to keep on our mental feet just as physical balance enables us to stand. The human organism, like a machine, is constructed to endure only a limited lack of balance. There are times, of course, when our mental balance is upset by events over which no one has any control, such as accidents, death, or illness. These emergencies may occasionally be tolerated, but continual lack of balance is extremely detrimental to mental health.

The best way to secure mental balance is to cultivate a variety of interests. The mentally unbalanced person almost always has an unduly concentrated interest in one direction. While success in anything depends on concentration and on spending much time on it, this concentration can be overdone. Everyone should have an avocation to balance his vocation. A man should be as interested in success in his avocation as in his vocation. Then if he happens to be a bank president and his bank fails—a tremendous shock to him on the vocational side—he always can turn to an avocation to maintain balance or until his vocational balance has been restored. During the tremendously difficult times of the depression many men were saved from a state of complete mental unbalance by this very thing.

(6) *Finishing what is started*. You may have heard the story of the man who stayed awake all night waiting for someone in the apartment above to drop the second shoe. Anyone who has actually undergone such an experience knows that this is more than a story. It is a reality. Did you ever hear anyone start *The Star-Spangled Banner* and then stop in the middle of it? Did you not have a feeling of incompleteness that was at least mildly disturbing? The unfinished task, for some reason or other, has a bad effect



on mental health. Psychologists have tried to explain the reason for this, but they have not been successful. We know, however, that it is a fact. The feeling of completeness that follows the finishing of a task has a beneficial effect upon mental health. This is particularly true when one has been used to a certain routine.

There is nothing wrong in itself about failing to complete a task, if one does not quit too soon or for a poor reason. Probably the bad effect of not finishing tasks lies partly in the development of the habit of starting many things and finishing none of them. You do not usually regard unfinished work as worthy of yourself. This may be bad for your own self-respect. If you undertook to write a murder mystery, most people would not enjoy the story if you wrote half of it and then got tired and quit. As a matter of fact no publisher would publish it. Publishers would recommend that you either finish it or do not try to sell it. The success of the world's business, too, depends on the finishing of tasks. Suppose that you were to start downtown on a streetcar and when halfway there, the motorman tired of running streetcars, stopped the car, and got off and left. Ridiculous as this may sound, motormen often do tire of running their streetcars and would like not to finish the task. But they must do so, not only for their own peace of mind, but for the peace of mind of others. "The show must go on" is a common expression among theater people, and it expresses the same idea of the need for finishing a task.

(7) *A technique of winning.* Little is said about the technique of winning. Most people like to win. Winning often furthers health. It banishes discouragement. Still there is a definite technique of knowing how to win. The satisfaction which comes is a legitimate one. It feeds one's

self-confidence up to a certain point. But have you ever seen the championship football team overconfident from winning too often—perhaps overconfident enough to break training? When such a team starts to lose, it is the worst-beaten and most pitiful spectacle in the athletic world. One of the main factors in the technique of winning, then, consists of retaining a sense of balance. It consists also of making things easy for the loser, for he may be the winner next time.

(8) *A technique of losing.* One of the best tests of an individual's mental equilibrium is his conduct when things are not going well. For this reason one of the favorite techniques of shrewd industrial leaders, superintendents of schools, and other employers, when planning to hire a new employee, is to place the individual in situations where he will lose and to note his behavior. A game of golf is an excellent place to judge the mental poise of the average man.

In this discussion of mental health, you may have detected already one of the chief problems—that of knowing just where balance rests. Take our present topic, the technique of losing. It would be poor advice to tell anyone to form the habit of being too happy about losing. No one admires the individual who does not fight to win. Yet he who unduly magnifies his loss places himself in a questionable mental condition. The whole problem lies in maintaining the proper balance. Balance lies between extremes, at a point that we must discover for each situation.

A poor technique of losing with its disturbing mental results often comes from an undue magnifying of the situation. Players who have a high competitive spirit are likely to wax overenthusiastic about the game itself, and

the disappointment at loss is more a sign of their competitive emotionalization than of the depth of the defeat. The technique of losing, then, consists primarily of viewing the whole situation in its proper perspective and of making the victor feel good about his victory.

(9) *Reasonable goals.* Success, since it promotes mental health, should be enjoyed as often as possible. Success depends on setting reasonable goals for oneself. Some failures are the result of tasks imposed upon us by others having the authority to do so. To that extent we are dependent for our success on the judgment of another. But far more often we are at liberty to select our own goals. Excellent as it may be to hitch our wagon to a star, there is much to be said for the satisfaction of knowing our limitations and acting accordingly.

(10) *A definite program.* Earlier in this discussion we talked about the importance of finishing tasks. Related to this, and equally necessary, is the matter of having a definite program. Students of human learning emphasize the values of organization in learning. It has also been pointed out in the chapter on "How to Study" that a systematic time-place arrangement is most effective in making study profitable. Entirely apart, however, from the greater efficiency that comes from a definite program of work, is the improved mental health that results from such a program. The human mind seems to prefer to work in a systematic and regular fashion. Continual irregularity and violations of routine have a disturbing mental effect.

(11) *Security.* Citizens of the United States, as well as of many smaller nations, are thinking and talking a great deal about social security. This is not because it is purely an administrative or political question, but because it strikes into the basis of the nation's mental health, a prob-

lem with which every good government is properly concerned. In our discussion of the enemies of mental health, we commented upon the disastrous effect of uncertainty and fear of the unknown. Upon just such a basis lack of security also rests. Human beings are vigorously opposed to an unsettled order of things and are very definitely upset mentally when they are not sure of their own physical well-being, where their next meal is coming from, whether or not their families are safe, and so on. The fact that the Townsend Plan, which aimed to provide an assured income for people in their advanced years, received such an enormous welcome, is eloquent testimony to the strong desire which everyone has for security.

In connection with mental health and security the thing to be remembered is that part of the effect undoubtedly lies in our attitude. Many individuals who are relatively secure disturb their mental health by overemphasizing minor details of possible insecurity and have no more confidence than others who are in a much more precarious position. No criticism is intended here of the mental uneasiness that comes from justified apprehension, but strong emphasis must be placed upon recognizing reasonable security.

(12) *Play*. Play is the safety valve of the human machine. Its significance in mental health can be determined readily by observing the conduct and attitudes of those who have never had an adequate amount of it. Some of those who have studied the nature of play say that it is just a method of working off surplus energy; others say that it is preparation for life activities in miniature form; still others maintain that play is the natural method for refreshing the mind as sleep restores the body. Regardless of what its ultimate nature may be, we are certain that play is partly

a matter of attitude, as in the case of certain other necessities of mental health. For example one man's play may be another man's work. People who make their living by commercial fishing do not usually go fishing when they have leisure. Probably the essential function of play from the standpoint of mental hygiene is that it provides varied activity. Its recreative mental effect seems to lie in this variety.

(13) *Rational viewpoint.* Adopting a rational point of view is often the first step in talking yourself or someone else out of a bad frame of mind. Frequently this is the only method of restoring mental balance. It works better, of course, with those who are fairly intelligent than with others, because a rational viewpoint depends on approaching a situation sensibly and objectively. This is what people often mean when they tell us to "be sensible" about our problems.

(14) *Sense of humor.* Humor has long been recognized as an aid toward mental health. One of the advantages of humor is that it leads to relaxation, the importance of which we have discussed. A sense of humor seems to be habitual with many successful people. They regard humorously situations which otherwise might disturb their mental health.

## 9. PERSONAL EFFICIENCY

In the modern world personal efficiency is absolutely vital to success. Sometimes one is tempted to believe that too much emphasis is placed, particularly in industrial fields, upon sheer mechanical, colorless efficiency. Yet with competition as it is in the modern business world, a concern which does not require efficiency in its employees

fares very badly indeed. In spite of this need, however, most people do not even approximate their real capabilities; they do not do nearly so well as they could. Professor Mursell, who has devoted a great deal of study to these problems, says upon this point: "The psychologist turns from the detail of his researches, straightens his weary back, rubs his tired eyes, and looks at you—you the average man of today. What does he see? What one thing about you impresses him most? *Your toleration in yourself of needless personal inefficiency in an age which requires efficiency.*"<sup>1</sup> Are you one of those to whom Professor Mursell refers? Do you tolerate within yourself needless personal inefficiency?

A question naturally occurs at this point: What has personal efficiency to do with mental hygiene? A few moments of thought will give the answer. If one is inefficient at his work or in his relations with other people, what happens? He loses his position or gets no raises in pay or has to continue the same job year after year or has trouble with people all the time. How do these situations affect one's mental state? Such conditions upset and disturb mental tranquillity, and hence affect mental health adversely. Poor mental health, in turn, lowers competence still further, and the vicious circle continues.

Let us consider a case from real life in which this inter-relationship between personal efficiency and mental hygiene is illustrated. Tom Jones, in his first year out of high school, was lucky and got a rather good job. Being only human, he was not one hundred per cent efficient. In the course of his duties, his superior found it necessary to point out certain places in which Tom's work could be improved. But Tom did not think the suggestions

<sup>1</sup> Mursell, James L., *Streamline Your Mind* (J. B. Lippincott Company, 1936), p. 1.

timely. His only concern was defending himself to himself and to others. (This tendency to fly into a defensive attitude whenever a suggestion is made to one is, by the way, another enemy of mental health.) The more Tom thought about the impertinence of his boss in making suggestions to him, the more upset and excited he became. The greater his excitement, the less attention he gave to his work and the more it suffered. Finally for sound and justifiable reasons, it was found necessary to discharge Tom Jones from his position. Today he is an unemployed malcontent convinced that society is now and always has been against him. It is probably entirely too late to bring him into friendly adjustment with society. The causes are these: personal inefficiency, which was easily remediable; mental inefficiency brought about by wrong reactions to suggestions; and complete maladjustment, the result of personal inefficiency plus poor mental hygiene.

Will you do as Tom Jones did if you get into the same situation? Or do you realize that efficiency is one of the most valuable acquisitions that you can attain, and do you appreciate any reasonable assistance given by others? This brings us logically to the next topic—how to help others.

## 10. HELPING OTHERS ATTAIN MENTAL HEALTH

It is splendid to be able to help oneself; it is even better to want to help others and to do so. When anyone has acquired both the desire and the technique of assisting other people, then, indeed, may he regard himself as a worthy member of society. For we may have the desire and lack the technique, or we may have the technique and lack the desire. Both are necessary, but persons who

have both are by no means numerous. We recognize the picture of the well-meaning blunderer who wishes to help everyone and is so clumsy in his way of doing so and in the selection of the things he says and does, that his only results are resentment and anger in others and unhappiness for himself. This man has the desire but lacks the technique. We readily recognize, also, the picture of the cool social tactician, facile in handling people, smooth in what he says, adroit in evading unpleasantness, and skillful in not giving cause for it, but withal, a selfish person bent on using his delicate technique only for his own advancement. This man has the technique but lacks the desire. Yes, both are needed. But although the desire to help others is normal for every kindly disposed human being, the technique of helping others sometimes requires long, serious study.

There are several general methods that everyone should know if he is interested in being of service to other people. Too many individuals, unfortunately, have only one string to their helping bow, when one or two more might make them of vastly greater assistance to their friends. We shall consider three principal methods of helping others. The temperament of the individual and the nature of the situation must determine which of these methods should be used, and how it should be adapted to a given case.

(1) *Direct suggestion.* If all people were objective-minded about themselves, possessed of good mental health and a desire to improve, direct suggestion would be by far the most effective means of giving help. For one thing it saves time, saves "bushbeating," and gets directly to the point. The difficulty with it is that, being blunt, direct suggestion often causes resentment in people. Even so, it is used in a great deal of modern advertising. The only difference



between the advertising and a man-to-man approach is that a hypothetical person is used in the former. Advertisements of soap, toothpaste, mouthwashes, vacuum cleaners, automobiles, and so on, abound with such remarks as, "He was hoping they could become engaged, until—"; "Why is it that all the boys in the office except my husband have received a raise?"; "There she was, getting along so well socially, until she started washing dishes with the wrong kind of soap." Illustrations of the foregoing sort do not need to be multiplied for you to recognize them. Many of them, of course, are direct efforts to sell merchandise, regardless of whether anyone is helped or not. Many excellent commercial products are advertised by this means. One might almost say that this type of advertising justifies itself even though some of the products do not work the miracles claimed for them, because it makes the public conscious of many things about themselves which otherwise might never be given adequate attention. Once attention is caught, even though the remedy may not be the one which the advertiser hopes it will be, people have been helped.

(2) *Indirect suggestion.* A high school principal invited a noted beauty-culture expert to talk to the girls in his school. The girls had been smoking altogether too much for their own good. The principal was wise enough to try an indirect method. The beauty-culture expert very casually mentioned the disastrous effects upon physical appearance of smoking too much, especially among young girls. The problem was solved and many young people were helped by this wise, indirect approach.

(3) *Example.* Example works well with intelligent people who are interested in improvement. If a person is doing something incorrectly or making a mistake of any kind

and someone for whom he has friendship and respect quietly does it otherwise, the example is likely to be noticed and acted upon. One example is worth a hundred precepts.

## II. SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Satisfaction, which contributes greatly to mental health, comes from knowing that one is improving. No one with common sense claims himself a failure because he is handicapped in various ways by things beyond his control. The person who cheerfully begins with such endowments as he may have and attempts to make the best possible use of them, contributes a full measure thereby, not only to social progress, but also to his own mental health.

The essence of self-improvement has been implied in our discussion of helping others. It is also implied in the old axiom "Practice what you preach." We all know the sort of person who can "dish it out," as the saying goes, but cannot "take it." He is the type of person who is always ready with good advice for someone else, but neither follows his own precepts nor accepts those of others. Self-improvement depends, first of all, on knowing our own capacity, as described in Chapter III. It depends, second, on making use of our structural equipment. And finally it depends on progressive self-analysis, coupled with the suggestions of others.

With nine out of ten people the obstacle to self-improvement is not a lack of a means or method of bringing it about, but perversity in their own attitude. When one understands what mental hygiene is, its physical and mental basis and its enemies and friends, then self-improvement and mental health depend only on using the knowledge that one has.

*Pupil Activities*

1. Can you think of an illustration of some physical variation from "normal" which is unhealthy?

2. At times when you are tired, are you able to judge whether it is from fatigue or boredom?

3. Here is a statement: "There is no such thing as a poison since everything is poison if it is taken in the improper quantity." Do you believe this statement or not? If so, why?

4. Summarize the case for temperance in all things as a health rule.

5. What do people usually do in the few minutes they save by automobile speeding? Do you think the risk is ordinarily worth while?

6. To what extent do you regard yourself as an efficient "relaxer"? Compare your experiences in relaxation with those of some of your fellow pupils.

7. Explain what is meant by "correct work-play rhythm."

8. How does the discussion of mental hygiene, as given in this chapter as a whole, compare with the ideas which you already had about mental health?

9. Give a definition of mental hygiene. Do you think it is a good one? Why, or why not?

10. What is your notion of the relation between physical and mental hygiene? Explain.

11. Name some of the factors on which sound physical and mental health depends.

12. Of the enemies of mental health discussed in this chapter, which do you think are the most serious? Which ones apply most to yourself?

13. What friends of mental health do you have? Which ones do you lack?

14. Is it possible that two traits, both of which are ordinarily conducive to mental health, might work against each other?

15. To what extent do you agree with the quotation from

Professor Mursell that tolerance of inefficiency is the greatest curse of the present day?

16. Some people claim that their peace of mind is helped more by being let alone than by any other way. Are you one of these? If not, what do you think is the best way to help someone else who is in a state of mental disturbance?

17. Do you have a program of self-improvement in mental health? Explain it to your classmates and see what reactions you get.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

# Your Character and Citizenship

### I. A MAN AND HIS MARKS OF CHARACTER

TOM KLEBORNE was exceedingly proud of Ajax, the best fighting dog in Texas. No matter what other dogs or wild animals were sent into the arena, the fight-to-the-finish courage of Ajax always revived Tom's own courage. Other dogs were hardly more than toys for this mighty warrior, and his latest battle with a wolf had ended in a great victory for Ajax.

Tom was dazed when his friend read for him the announcement of the next battle, for he heard these terrifying words: "Ajax—bulldog—121 pounds *vs.* Puma or Mexican Lion, 126 pounds." What puzzled Tom was, "Whicha dese animules is we got to fight?" After being told that a puma is a Mexican lion, but "not a real African lion or nothin'," Tom was satisfied: "We takes him on then."

Glancing at Ajax, Tom again gained self-control, self-respect, satisfaction, confidence, courage, and decision.

The hour of the battle arrived and Ajax fought once more to a victorious finish, leaving the wild animal lifeless. But the victory was costly. Tom took the wounded warrior to his own hotel room, crushed by the knowledge that Ajax could fight no more.

Looking again at Ajax, Tom became wide-eyed, tense, and kept staring into space. No sleep for Tom that night.

Tom himself was defeated. Gone was the inspiration that had given him courage to face the world manfully. The next day Ajax whined for help as man and dog left their lodging place. Tom's marks of character had passed away: "An' now we's gwine home. Gwine to rest ouah bones de rest ob our lives ovah in Mississippi."<sup>1</sup>

What is meant by saying that the marks of Tom's character had passed away? We mean that his self-control, self-respect, satisfaction, confidence, courage, and decision vanished when his once-powerful Ajax became a helpless veteran of the arena.

At his best Tom was not an example of high character—he had only a few of the marks. Aside from Ajax he had no source of manhood. After the lion tore away the strength of Ajax, Tom lost the few marks of character he had possessed. True, he pitied Ajax, and this pity was a mark in his favor. But his pity was only that of a beaten man, and not that of a strong man who could face the world and fight his own battles. He was no longer the Tom Kleborne who could smile, jest, and take the banter of the crowd. Tom's personality had changed.

## 2. YOU AND YOUR CHARACTER

Your character attracts friends. It stamps you as a person who can be trusted. It gives you a personality. It protects you from mental disorder. Your character is the key to your real self. It is your only key to success.

Lose your character, and you could not move, see, or feel. You would no longer be a human being. Your hope of success would vanish. Your friends would shun the shell

<sup>1</sup> Hardman, F. A., "The Fighters," *Story*, IX, December, 1936, pp. 38-53.

that remained. You would be relieved, though, of all worry, fear, and anxiety—your conscience would trouble you no longer. But you could not do as you pleased, for you could not do anything.

Your character acts off stage behind your conduct. You cannot see your character. You cannot perceive it with any of your senses. Neither can you see the character of anyone else.

The nearest you can come to seeing character is watching other people's or your own conduct. *Your knowledge of character comes from your knowledge of conduct.* As you know, much of your conduct is inside yourself, concealed from view. No one can know everything about your conduct. Hence no one can know all about your character or define it fully. The best that anyone can do is to give a partial description of it. In this respect character is like gravity and energy, which act off stage behind the conduct of machines.

Character is something that has been named just as electricity has and for the same kind of reason: From the conduct of a man we have evidence of what we call character, and from the conduct of a motor we have evidence of what we call electricity. We can learn about character as we can learn about electricity; that is, by the conduct that each generates. We miss much about both character and electricity because we cannot know about all the conduct that they generate—much of it may be hidden from us. We can describe them only in terms of known conduct.

Besides the evidence that we get about character from observing the conduct of other people and from watching our own movements, we may get evidence from searching ourselves. This evidence is likely to be inaccurate, for we



are often poor judges of ourselves. When we see another person acting as we have acted, we search ourselves and then assume that his reason for so acting is the same as ours was. Sometimes this judgment is true. If a man is eating heartily, we assume that he is driven by the kind of force that leads ourselves to food, and so we conclude that the man is hungry. We are confident also that he is free from certain other forces—nausea, for example. These judgments are accepted as true. At other times we see or hear of a man who gives large sums of money to the needy. Our judgments about the force that prompts him to give may be either true or false. Usually our judgment is that kindness prompts the man, but he may be suffering from a bad conscience or he may be a pleasure seeker enjoying the sight of poor people at his feet or he may be advertising himself. To make a correct judgment about this man, we should need much knowledge of the whole situation.

At this point in our examination of character, it is desirable to recall our structural basis for living, as described in Chapter III, and to trace it through to character. Protoplasm was found to be active and responsive to stimulation. When stimulated in certain ways by its surroundings, it acts accordingly. If this stimulation is long-continued, the action becomes habitual. This goes on and on, until the entire body acts in a co-ordinated or habitual way.

As your responses to stimulations continue, you become the sort of person that you are now, with various kinds of competence or ability to do things. You now use such competence as you possess, in order to guide your conduct. This is what we meant when we said that your character acts off stage behind your conduct. Character consists of

different types of competence and acts habitually through them. Beginning, then, with the most vague reactions of your protoplasm, experience has carried you on until you have competence to guide your conduct. To a great extent you have developed your character yourself. In the next section we shall discuss character as everyone's problem of self-adjustment.

### 3. CHARACTER AS PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT TO THE WORLD

A child is born with bodily equipment for character, but not with character itself. The world about the child stimulates its body, but the stimulation itself cannot guarantee character to the child. These two foundations of character—bodily equipment and a stimulating world—require one additional factor that each person must supply.

(1) *Mental effort as an essential for personal adjustment.* When we think of character as a personal problem, this additional factor is seen to be the central one. This central factor is the person's own mental effort. To make this mental effort, time is required—time to count ten or possibly a thousand. This point has been mentioned in previous discussions, and it includes such elements as time for analysis, time for deliberation, time for judging another person, and time for telling right from wrong.

By waiting before we speak or act, we can deliberate, form a correct judgment, and select a wise course of action. This period of delay enables man to use his human equipment instead of rushing headlong, like an animal, into the first course of action that presents itself. Obviously certain desirable qualities of character are needed to enable man to make an effective adjustment for himself while

he delays his action. These qualities will be discussed in a moment.

Mental effort enables every person to modify the effects of both bodily structure and environmental stimulation. Without such effort there would be no hope or possibility of a person's rising above animal life. The most intelligent dog or horse or elephant can modify but little the reactions of his body when it is stimulated by the surrounding world. Man can modify these reactions greatly. How man can do this is our problem here.

(2) *Examples of character development.* Here are examples to illustrate what is meant by the mental effort that is required for character development. First, to select an everyday experience, there was a young boy who borrowed a book from a friend. The book was valued highly by the boy and by his friend. Accidentally the book was damaged. What did the boy do? He might have done as people often do with damaged borrowed articles: He might have neglected to do anything. Instead he made an effort, and the effort led to a decision. By exerting himself he found a way to meet his friend, and he made arrangements to pay for the book. Of course his character was modified in a good direction. By taking many short steps like this—difficult and, at times, painful steps in the right direction—this boy developed a character that every American now respects.

Second, a certain committee chairman was once faced by a group of dissatisfied men ready to desert their duty and return to their homes. The chairman had no more at stake than many of the other men had. He was denounced, ridiculed, and even shunned by some of his former friends. At that time he might have returned to his quiet home in Virginia and let the world go on in its

own way. Instead he exerted himself day after day, year after year. For himself he developed still further a character that was already strong. Any American who reveres his native country, reveres also the character of that man.

Third, a boy named Jimmy was in trouble. His exasperated father brought him to a judge for counsel, when Jimmy was fourteen. But the boy paid little attention to the advice and soon returned to his gang. He disliked both school and work. Before long he entered a vacant house and did five hundred dollars' damage to the house by tearing out a little piping. Again Jimmy was taken to court and "sent away" until Christmas—the judge thought that Christmas at home would help him. During the holidays back came Jimmy with a strange request: He asked to be sent away again. At last through the help of those in charge of the reform school, he had found something to do. Then his own effort carried him along until, after a year of voluntary imprisonment, he returned to the outside world with a skill and a will to use it. He is now a wireless operator: This boy is an example of a person who had adequate bodily structure together with the kind of environmental stimulation that many other boys have. But his inside activities—his own mental effort—did not begin to operate well until other people helped him. He had a personal problem early in his life, but he was incompetent, that is, unwilling to harness himself, until he was confined with strong and favorable stimulation for a long enough time to think about his problem and solve it. Finally his own efforts, and not the efforts of others, saved him.

Fourth, Jimmy's judge has his own personal problems. Let us follow him for a day to see how he has harnessed himself. Of course he had prepared himself for his work

partially by completing a course in law before he became a judge, but in addition to this, he has harnessed himself in other ways and he continues to keep himself fit for his work. Early in the morning he often walks three miles from his home to court. Then he sits in court until about one o'clock. Next comes luncheon, after which come business activities followed by indoor recreations, along with the reading and other work that every lawyer has to do. He plays golf, swims, and goes boating and picnicking, and he says that almost any outdoor recreation is what he enjoys most. He enjoys indoor amusements, too, including movies and detective stories. In fact he practices what he preaches, and his success with delinquent boys and girls seems to depend on this fact. He says that four essentials in considering any child's case are (1) health, (2) religious training, (3) education, and (4) recreation. So many delinquents lack this fourth essential that special arrangements are made with boys' and girls' organizations: "We try to remedy poor recreational habits through our boys' clubs, girls' clubs, church and social organizations, and through the Big Brothers' and Sisters' Organizations."

Here is the judge's own account:

Now, you have asked me just how these delinquent children are handled. If a child is found delinquent, for one week he is sent to the Shelter of the Children's Society. There he has a good bed, substantial food, and he attends the classes held. He is, however, deprived of his liberty, and he reflects there. In the meantime an investigation is made of his associates. We investigate the home, school, religion, companions, and anything else that might have led to his being brought into court. When he comes back to the court many of the factors leading to the delinquent act have been discovered. We check with the

clinic, too—our psychologists and psychiatrists. We try to find out whether there is a mental problem. If a probation of from six months to a year works out all right, the delinquent child is discharged. If probation does not work, he is sent to an institution for further treatment. There he can get an education and learn a useful vocation. Sometimes he leaves the institution, after good behavior, at the request of the parents. Sometimes he leaves later.<sup>1</sup>

(3) *Six personal qualities necessary for adjustment.* Six qualities of character are illustrated in these examples; these qualities exist in everyone. Before studying the examples just given, therefore, let us notice these qualities, which are in many ways similar to the ones that you have used already in your personal inventory (Chapter XI):

|                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Adequate knowledge         | Social competence                  |
| Adequate skill             | Creative competence                |
| Problem-solving competence | Volitional competence <sup>2</sup> |

These six qualities are so closely woven together in everyone's character that they cannot be separated. To get a clear idea of these character qualities, think of yourself and a friend as experienced travelers through a forest. Suppose that, ahead of you, a river blocks your way. *Knowledge* tells you that there is no path by which to go around the river. *Skill* enables you to build a raft, while *problem-solving competence* tells you how to plan it—if you happen to know the rules for making rafts. *Social competence* enables you and your friend to work together in making it. *Creative competence* may tell you how to invent some other means of escape if you have never made a raft and if you

<sup>1</sup> Moody, Sue, "Judge Peter B. Hanson," *American Swedish Monthly*, February, 1936, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote, p. 236.

have no clear-idea of how to make one. *Volitional competence* tells you to go to work and apply your best knowledge and best skill. Life is like this forest. Many difficulties lie across your way. You need all six qualities of character to meet the difficulties of each day. If you exhibit these qualities, an understanding observer may judge your conduct and conclude that you have character.

(4) *How the examples illustrate the six personal qualities.* Let us now return to our examples to see how they illustrate these six character qualities. To accomplish what he did, each of these persons used all six forms of competence, but he used them in different ways. Lincoln's previous experience gave him adequate knowledge of how he himself would feel if someone had failed to return a borrowed article of his. This feeling came from his social competence and stirred his volitional competence. Volitional competence drove him to face the problem. His creative competence had already enabled him to fashion a design for living—a design that would not permit him to dodge an important issue. His skill was adequate to enable him to do the work necessary to pay for the book.

Jimmy's case is different. When he was first brought to court, he was below normal in every character quality—because he was unbalanced. He was unbalanced because he was a dodger. He dodged the kinds of experiences that might have given him adequate knowledge—he refused to learn the guides to successful living in school—and he would not work enough to acquire adequate skill. His volitional competence—his will power—was ineffective because of his lack of knowledge and skill and because he was incompetent socially. His design for living was crooked, and so his problem solving was misdirected. He was such a bad misfit that he had to be kept away from other people.

Jimmy's reform began early enough in his life to enable society to help him in a short time. When he was "sent away," two possibilities remained for him: He could refuse to do anything that was asked of him, paying the painful price of refusing; or he could follow the directions given by someone else. Without knowing exactly what happened to Jimmy, we can suppose that firm stimulation set his will-to-act in a new direction. Then followed skill and knowledge about wireless. Next he must have found that other people were not so bad as he had believed they were. Greater social competence probably came from this discovery. Finally he found that he could create things for himself and solve problems about wireless more easily than some other boys. All these experiences stimulated him to design a new way of living and develop ability to follow his design.

In similar ways the adjustments of George Washington and Judge Hanson can be analyzed. Indeed the adjustment of any successful life comes through personal effort in developing these six qualities of character. Neglect of any quality throws a person out of balance. Then society either disregards him as a minus quantity or plans special means to develop his stunted qualities. Most people are not character-dwarfs like Jimmy at the time he first went to court, but all of us need the help of society in developing ourselves. To this help from society we must add our personal effort.

All successful living depends on personal character, and character is a problem of adjustment. "Inside" activity must lead to a resolve to face problems instead of to dodge them. Perseverance in carrying out the resolve until a forward step has been taken is essential. *Strong moral character constantly develops from a combination of a highly vital*



*bodily structure and well-chosen stimulations from environment.* Such character is a good basis for continued growth in the future. Character develops or "grows" from year to year just as it began: New stimulations occur, correct responses are discovered, and new habits are acquired.

Summarizing this discussion, we find that the development of character requires a person (1) to study himself as well as other people; (2) to harness himself for action; (3) to acquire the best guides to living; (4) to adjust himself to society; and (5) to create a design for living and follow the design, improving it whenever possible.

#### 4. HOW TO DEVELOP CHARACTER

The characteristic thing about character development is that we have to work for it. No one ever developed a strong character by sitting on a stone and resting. The most encouraging thing about character is that if we work, we can have it. Tom Kleborne never bothered about his character. Ajax developed almost all the character that Tom ever had. When Ajax finished the lion—and himself, he finished Tom, too. Tom was never interested in working to improve himself, and so he never had a strong character. Your character, we hope, comes from a higher source. But as we have said, you have to work for it.

Most people are interested in doing something to improve themselves. There are just six things to do. Fortunately most people cannot avoid doing these six things to some extent. And still more fortunately, these things are the right things to do—they are the sources of your character, as far as you have anything to do with its development. These six things are already familiar to you. They

should be done effectively. This section will show their relation to character.

(1) *Acquire adequate knowledge.* Every time that you learn the meaning of anything, you increase your chance of success. Your chance will be great if the significance of what you know is great and if you use it effectively. The value of your knowledge by itself would be zero—if your knowledge could exist by itself. The value of your knowledge when you use it as a guide to living, is incalculable—your success, personality, and character are founded upon it.

If you have adequate knowledge about anything, you have the first key to successful action. The same key locks unsuccessful action outside the door. If you have adequate knowledge, you are informed about things that are dangerous or safe, damaging or satisfying, right or wrong. Wrong choices are usually made by people who have only partial knowledge. Correct choices are usually made by people who have adequate knowledge.

An ancient saying tells us that "Knowledge is Virtue," because our knowledge of a situation is our guide to our choice of action. Often, however, our items of knowledge conflict, and imperfect wisdom or uncontrolled emotion may cause us to follow the less desirable items. If we have the habit of preferring short-lived ease, we may be influenced by certain items to choose an hour of trifling amusement; if we have the habit of following the best course whether it is easy or not, certain other items may influence us in favor of an hour of healthful recreation or profitable work.

Most criminals know the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule. Yet every criminal follows the wrong road,

because in addition to such knowledge, he knows another set of rules which he thinks are better, and he tries to follow them instead of the best rules. By doing so, he provides a good example of the importance of using correct knowledge for successful living. His error begins with false notions; the further he follows them, the further he is from virtue. If he had really adequate knowledge, he would have seen that his own rules were not good ones.

To make the best judgment about any value or any situation, you need the fullest and most accurate knowledge that you can get from school, church, library, and so on, as well as from your own observation. Knowledge of what is right is an aid in doing what is right. The habitual following of such knowledge is a mark of character.

(2) *Acquire adequate skill.* Skill is much like knowledge in its relation to character. It is, indeed, a form of knowledge. We often say that a person is a skillful musician. We mean that he knows music and can play an instrument or sing. Still a person may know many facts about music without being able to play any instrument—he lacks skill. Without skill no one can do well at anything except breathing and possibly walking. Every good skill gives its possessor a key to right conduct. The ability to speak a foreign language is partially a skill; if we know the words of the language and if we have skill in reading or speaking them, we can find out how to act more effectively toward foreigners.

The person who has no special skill for right conduct is unable to direct his behavior effectively. He may know what to do, but he is unable to do it. He is a victim of unpreparedness, and lacking good fortune, he often drifts

into evil ways, developing only a skill for wrong conduct. The reformation of a criminal usually comes through his development of a good skill.

If you have any useful skill, you need not falter—you can stand squarely and face the world. Such ability is one of your means for driving out that old enemy of mankind, self-deception.

(3) *Acquire problem-solving competence.* Both skill and knowledge have to be directed. If you and your friend were experienced travelers when you faced the forest river, you probably had useful knowledge and skills, but you had to apply them. You had to reason about getting across the river. Knowledge supplies the facts to be used in reasoning; problem-solving competence enables you to use your rules and your skills in finding a solution. This competence is necessary for every question about what to do next.

Problem-solving competence can be developed by practice. The solving of many kinds of problems increases your ability to meet still other problems successfully, for many problems are much alike. Daily practice in making choices is another way to develop this competence.

Every choice that you make and every difficulty that you overcome depends on problem-solving competence. Your actions are guided by such choices and such solutions of difficulties. Therefore the better your problem-solving competence is, the better your conduct will be—if you apply your rules and follow your solutions.

(4) *Acquire social competence.* Social competence is a basis for all morality, because morality itself is a social problem. Such competence supplies the ability to get along with other people. Lack of this social ability lies behind nearly all human failures, while possession and practice of it

leads to nearly all successes. Both Lincoln and the artist were socially competent (Chapter XI); social adjustment (Unit IV) employs this type of competence; doing the greatest good to the greatest number (Chapter XV) depends on it; all forms of progressive morality (Chapter XV) require it; while personality and mental hygiene (Chapters XVI and XVII) are chiefly forms of social competence. The earlier you see the absolute necessity for social competence, the earlier you can make your conduct effective.

(5) *Acquire creative competence.* Creative competence is closely related to problem solving. The distinction arises out of the originality of creative competence. In problem solving we apply the rules that we already know or the rules that someone else gives us. In creative activity we go beyond rules; at least we invent new ways of applying rules. We combine something of ourselves, so to speak, with the rules. We are on a quest for something that will express ourselves; we meet conditions in a way that is new, at least for ourselves.

Successful creative activity leads to Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. When you create effective rules for meeting a difficulty, you create or discover truth. If you discover facts that are new to the world or even to yourself, you again create truth. Your quest may be for the expression of the good or the beautiful. If successful, it will probably yield deep emotional rewards. Originality and resourcefulness, together with the emotional accompaniments of rich self-expression, are the marks of creative competence.

Creative competence is expressed in different forms by different persons. One of its lowest forms is shown by the person who can take things apart without being able to put them together again; its highest forms are shown by

the genius, who may be an artist, an inventor, a statesman, or a scientist. The person who creates effectively expresses truth or goodness or beauty so that he and others can see it more clearly. In this way he helps himself and others toward more effective conduct. The statesman may do this, as Jefferson did by drafting the Declaration of Independence. The musician may create works in which he expresses his profoundest feelings concerning life and humanity, as Beethoven did. The inventor may produce a timesaving machine, as Howe did. The poet may portray the beauty of everyday life, as Wordsworth did. And so on for other creative workers.

Effective creative workers use all sorts of knowledge and skill to express their solutions of life's problems for society. In the self-inventory questions in Chapter XI, creative activities that everyone can carry on were included. Add to those activities such things as making a "design for living" or constructing and carrying out any effective plan for action, and the place of creativeness as a prompter of conduct will be clear. Without it a man is a drifter or a routine mechanic in regard to his life; with it a man is an adventurer and a creator in miniature. To be effective he must use all his other character qualities, and to be most effective his social organizations must encourage and permit him to carry out his good plans.

(6) *Acquire volitional competence.* Human emotions and feelings are priceless. Like other human qualities, they must be trained, but they must not be crushed. They are the driving forces of character. Training, direction, and control of them give volitional competence. Creative competence may enable us to make a design for living: Volitional competence then gives us a will to follow the design.

Volitional competence is the disciplined will-to-act. When we know what to do and how to do it, this disciplined will says, "Go ahead." By personifying the will in this way, we do not mean that it is a portion of the mind that sits as a prompter, apart from other character qualities. Instead this quality is inseparable from the five other qualities of character. We can speak of a man with a will as we can speak of an apple with a tang. We cannot take out the tang of the apple for inspection any more than we can take out the will of the man for a microscopic analysis. Both the tang and the will vanish as soon as we try to separate them from the rest of an apple or a man. They are like the quantities in an equation, where each quantity gets its meaning from the whole equation. It is possible, however, to talk about the disciplined will of a man, just as it is possible to talk about the  $a$  or  $b$  or  $x$  of an equation.

Volitional competence prompts us in three ways: toward the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. Another prompter, incompetence, wages a constant battle in many of us, prompting us toward the false, the ugly, and the bad. A person who has volitional competence has all his forces—his feelings, his attitudes, his interests, and so forth—trained to advance in the three desirable directions. Since his choice of sources of action will always be governed by this competence, and since his actions themselves will be prompted by his disciplined will, the relation of volitional competence to character is obvious.

In this discussion of the development of character, physical competence has been omitted. The reason for this omission is that all the physical competence you can develop will come as a matter of course if you develop the six other kinds of competence. For example adequate

knowledge tells you what to do to develop health, adequate skill enables you to exercise as you should, problem-solving competence gives you ability to apply all that you know about health to your own problems, and so on for other competences.

### 5. IS HUMAN PERFECTION POSSIBLE?

Absolute perfection is unknown in man; no man is absolutely perfect in the six character qualities described in this chapter. But there is a kind of perfection that is possible for man. This may be called human perfection. It seems to exist in many people. *Human perfection is found in everyone who does the best he can with his six character qualities.* Such a person may be young or old. He plays, works, sleeps, and eats as other people do, except for the fact that *he is guided in all his conduct by all the qualities of character.*

There is nothing magical or impossible about human perfection of this kind, but it does require effort—effort of great quantity and high quality. The effort required is so great that many persons fail to achieve such perfection. They prefer instead a subnormal human existence, and their unsuccessful conduct is the consequence. The person who exerts himself enough to achieve human perfection simply does *his* best. He has to be the judge of what *his* best is. He is likely to make many mistakes as he advances, because “his best” may turn out badly. But if he waited until his every action was certain to be absolutely perfect, he would never do anything. He is forever learning as much as he can from his own conduct. The nearer a person comes to being an all-round genius, the better his conduct will be. Few people are near-geniuses, but all people can do their best—and this is all that is required of them.



Human perfection for you is *your* best and not some other person's best.

We can now summarize our description of character development. But let us repeat that neither we nor anyone else can give a complete description of it, because no one knows all about it. Character is a driving force built upon the foundation that the infant has at birth. It is the force that thrusts all human beings into action. It is made up of six qualities that act together to determine the directions that the force will take: knowledge, skill, problem-solving competence, social competence, creative competence, and volitional competence. The worth of character depends on the value of these qualities as they are balanced or fitted together. The development of character consists, therefore, of developing and balancing these qualities.

Growth of character is the responsibility of each individual person; its development depends on each person's resources at any given time. Judgment of character can be made principally according to two types of standards: absolute standards and individual standards. When character is judged according to absolute standards, no one can be judged perfect; when character is judged according to individual standards, a person has perfect character as far as he is concerned if he is making the best possible use of his resources at his stage of development. Character is not conduct, nor is it morality; it is the force behind both conduct and morality.

## 6. IS CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT TOO MUCH OF A STRAIN?

A question is often asked about character development: Can everyone stand the strain of facing his problems

squarely and persistently? This question arises from the universal desire to avoid strain. Many people who ask it seem to think that an easier way of living can be found. Let us examine the "easier way," taking first the example of Lincoln and the borrowed book. What would have happened inside Lincoln had he neglected to face his problem? At first, of course, he would have been free—apparently; he could have kept the money he received for his work instead of giving it in payment for the damaged book. The money could have been used to buy another book or anything else he desired. Still better, apparently, Lincoln could have used the money to get himself out of the community and away from its troublesome problem. This would have been a complete escape, apparently. But what would have gone on inside the boy after that "escape"? The person who cannot answer this question from his own experience is rare indeed.

What was Jimmy's answer to our question about the strain caused by character development? As we first found him facing the judge, we can imagine severe strain. Still he followed his former "easy" course. Next we saw him sneaking into a vacant house and later appearing before the judge for an even more straining experience than before. On his third visit to court the old strain was apparently missing, but a new strain had come with his new purpose. Evidently he found the new strain less annoying than the old one had been.

Probably everyone has experienced the strain that comes from both the dodging of issues and the facing of issues. The strain of dodging seems to come afterward, rather than at the time of the attempted escape from the issue. But such strain increases from day to day and year to year, and it gradually tears down a person's character.

Everyone who dodges knows that shirking a duty is disagreeable in the long run, and that there is little rest, if any, for the troubled person who does so. The strain of facing issues squarely seems to come mainly at the time the issue is raised. But this strain decreases from that moment, and it builds up character. It leads to decision and action, which are among the essentials of character. Everyone who faces issues squarely knows that honest action is agreeable in the long run, and that honest pride and rest lie ahead. The man who dodges carries "a cumbersome load" that weighs him down; the man who faces issues has a strong support to buoy him up. Experience, our costly teacher, tells us which of these two men bears the heavier strain through life.

Character development *is* a strain, but the strain of guilt is greater. The reason is that guilt requires a person to construct himself in such a fashion that he does not adjust to the facts of life in the best possible way. Constant watch is necessary to conceal guilt, for any unguarded word or act may lead to complete exposure. Lack of character leads to guilt, guilt leads to fear, and fear born of guilt leads to the strained and hunted look that betrays the shifty culprit's deceptive (and self-deceptive) action. The strain of facing issues is like the strain of an enduring tower: Its strain is supported by a sound foundation. Lack of character brings the kind of strain that tears life apart; character development brings the kind of strain that binds the materials of life into a permanent structure.

## 7. DOES SUCCESS DEPEND ON HIGH CHARACTER?

Before we can agree upon the meaning of success, we need a list of items that indicate both success and failure.

If we agree upon such a list, we can examine the items one by one to see whether or not high character leads to success. The following list includes many items that should be taken into account in our notions of success and failure:

#### MARKS OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

| <i>Success</i>        | <i>Failure</i>          |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Plenty             | 1. Poverty              |
| 2. Friends            | 2. Enemies              |
| 3. Health             | 3. Disease              |
| 4. Physical strength  | 4. Physical weakness    |
| 5. Strong personality | 5. Negative personality |
| 6. Mental competence  | 6. Mental incompetence  |
| 7. Self-control       | 7. Lack of self-control |
| 8. Self-respect       | 8. Self-contempt        |
| 9. Honor              | 9. Dishonor             |
| 10. Satisfaction      | 10. Discontent          |
| 11. Peace             | 11. Turmoil             |
| 12. Order             | 12. Disorder            |

Very likely you will object strongly to the inclusion of some of the items in the failure list. Poverty, disease, and physical weakness, for example, belong in the list only as the world looks at a person. Certain people who have these "marks of failure" are more successful than many other people who enjoy plenty, health, and physical strength. Probably, however, everyone who is marked by poverty, disease, and physical weakness would consider himself more successful if he could have *all* the marks in the success column.

If we are to judge the relation of high character to success, a similar list of character items is needed. Although the items in the following list are stated in everyday terms,

the terms may have many meanings for different persons. Our own meanings are, therefore, indicated in parentheses.

### MARKS OF HIGH AND LOW CHARACTER

#### *High Character*

1. Competence (of the six kinds described in this chapter)

2. Balance (consistency, decision, self-control, calmness, poise)

3. Straight thinking (good judgment, facing of issues, reliability, clear-headedness, sanity)

4. Morality (conformity with the time and the place, self-honesty, conservation of self)

5. Tolerance (consideration of others, unselfishness, attendance to one's own affairs)

6. Open-mindedness (absence of prejudice, unbiasedness, readiness for new evidence from the past, present, or future)

7. Continued development (growth or maturation)

#### *Low Character*

1. Incompetence (ignorance, lack of skill, unsociableness, fickleness, mental rubbish and lack of understanding),

2. Unbalance (shiftiness, indecision, subjection to tantrums, lack of self-control, eccentricity)

3. Crooked thinking (bad judgment, dodging of issues, "trickiness," gullibility, unsoundness of mind)

4. Immorality (unconformity with the time and the place, self-deceit, hypocrisy, dissipation)

5. Intolerance (inconsideration of others, selfishness, meddlesomeness)

6. Opinionativeness (prejudice, dogmatism, bias, refusal to accept new evidence from the past, present, or future)

7. Arrested or retarded development (stuntedness or dwarfed condition of character)

- |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8. Broad interests (in both work and recreation; in various kinds of people and in many forms of knowledge; in both art and industry; and so on) | 8. Narrow interests (in either work or recreation; in few kinds of people and in few forms of knowledge; in either art or industry; and so on) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

These lists are both general and relative. They are general because they fit no one exactly. They are relative because a person is either better or worse than someone else in these respects, but no one is absolutely perfect in all the items of the left-hand column of either list. All that we can say is that the successful man is more likely than the unsuccessful man to show the marks that are catalogued under success. Likewise the man of high character is more likely than the man of low character to show the qualities of the left-hand column of the second list.

You may object to our including competence as a mark of high character. Such an objection furnishes the best possible opportunity to begin our defense of this list, because the first mistake that most people make in thinking about character comes at this point. We insist that there is no competent rogue. A grafter, for example, is grossly incompetent, even if he collects large sums of money and is never exposed. The reason is that he breaks the rules of social organizations, and thus he shows his social incompetence. He does not direct himself toward either the true or the good. The worst mistake to make about character is to think that a person can be competent in any one quality of character without being competent in all six qualities. Competence itself is a general term that includes all the other items in the list.

Can a rogue be successful? The answer is *No*. The

grafter can be used again as an example. He may have certain marks of success, but his "success" will be clouded by many marks of failure. And from the point of view of personal and social adjustment, his failure will occur in the most critical points. His enemies will include all the socially competent men from whom he has collected booty. His personality will be weak, because he will lack at least eight of the twenty-four essential personality traits described in Chapter XVI: reliability, tolerance, unselfishness, consideration, confidence, self-control, sense of proportion, and good taste. He will be mentally incompetent because he thinks crookedly—he dodges the issues that a socially competent man faces. He will lack self-respect, unless he is too incompetent to see his own social incompetence. He will be dishonored by all the competent citizens who know of his graft. As a rogue the grafter may have marks of success; but as a citizen, he has, in most respects, the marks of failure.

Leaving the grafter as an example of low character and failure, let us turn again to Lincoln. A glance at both our lists is sufficient for us to place him correctly. Even here, however, difficulties arise. His life was not filled with peace and order. But if we look carefully, we find that his public career began in the midst of turmoil and disorder, and that he contributed the full measure of his devotion to the bringing of peace and order to his nation. His life was a success, and he owed his success to his character.

A very different, but equally successful, man of high character is idealized in *The Cotter's Saturday Night* by Robert Burns. The cotter's talent seems to have been slight and his circumstances none too good, but according to the poet, he meets our demand that each person do his best, however poor that may be. To his character the

cotter owed what success he had, and his score is high on each of the twelve items in the list.

A detailed examination of the items of the lists might be profitable, but it would lengthen the present discussion unnecessarily. Our answer to the question of this section is simply that high character is the best guaranty of success. It does not always lead to plenty or to peace, but as compared with low character, it is the more certain road.

## 8. CITIZENSHIP AS A CO-OPERATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

At eighteen years of age the youth of ancient Greece took an oath that summarized the civic training of his time. After he took the oath, he was presented with spear and shield, and with due ceremony, he was received into citizenship. This impressive oath ran as follows:

I will never disgrace these sacred arms, nor desert my companion in the ranks. I will fight for temples and public property, both alone and with many. I will transmit my fatherland, not only not less, but greater and better, than it was transmitted to me. I will obey the magistrates who may at any time be in power. I will observe both the existing laws and those which people may unanimously hereafter make; and, if any person seek to annul the laws or set them at naught, I will do my best to prevent him, and will defend them both alone and with many. I will honor the religion of my fathers.

Since that era, citizenship has changed. Parts of the ancient oath fit our times; other parts do not. Some of the parts that may fit our times are unacceptable to many Americans of various ages, political parties, and religious



groups. If an invading army threatened our borders, boys and men by the millions would probably accept the first two sentences of the oath, and girls and women would assist them in carrying out the resolve. In time of peace many of the same persons would object to those sentences.

The third sentence of the Greek oath is theoretically acceptable to Americans, but plans for making the country greater and better have been the center of so much controversy and have met with so much opposition that many well-meaning citizens despair of national improvement. Some would preserve the Constitution, others would change the government and start afresh, and the majority of both these groups may be unfamiliar with the Constitution. Obedience to magistrates is still generally acceptable, at least in theory if not in practice. Observance of all present and future laws has been both impractical and impossible for several decades, for no one is familiar with all the laws or even with all the judicial interpretations of the laws that he does know. Besides, many old laws are annulled and new ones enacted annually; it is well known how often Americans vote for legislators who promise to repeal certain unpopular laws. There is no national religion, and with intermarriages among members of different religions, a youth would need a complexion like a chameleon's to honor the religions of all his fathers. Citizenship has changed and become more complicated than it has ever been. In early times little knowledge was required of citizens; now much accurate information is necessary for all who would perform their civic duties intelligently.

Citizenship, like character, requires effort. This is because everything that we have said about character and, indeed, about social institutions, morals, and personal

adjustment applies to citizenship. Citizenship requires high character with all its qualities and competences. Examples of men of high character may be used as equally strong examples of men of excellent citizenship. The forms of competence in character become forms of competence in citizenship as soon as we transfer and apply them to civic institutions. In this short section our purpose is little more than to point out the need for this transfer and the application of what has been stated in all our earlier discussions.

In that purpose we have been helped by achievements of mind and spirit. Old truths have been relearned; untruths have been unlearned. We have always known that heedless self-interest was bad morals; we know now that it is bad economics. Out of the collapse of a prosperity whose builders boasted their practicality has come the conviction that in the long run economic morality pays. We are beginning to wipe out the line that divides the practical from the ideal, and in so doing we are fashioning an instrument of unimagined power for the establishment of a morally better world.

This new understanding undermines the old admiration of worldly success as such. We are beginning to abandon our tolerance of the abuse of power by those who betray for profit the elementary decencies of life.

In this process evil things formerly accepted will not be so easily condoned. Hard-headedness will not so easily excuse hard-heartedness. We are moving toward an era of good feeling. But we realize that there can be no era of good feeling save among men of good will.

For these reasons I am justified in believing that the greatest change we have witnessed has been the change in the moral climate of America.

Among men of good will science and democracy together offer an ever richer life and ever larger satisfaction to the in-

dividual. With this change in our moral climate and our rediscovered ability to improve our economic order, we have set our feet upon the road of enduring progress.<sup>1</sup>

Citizenship today has one supreme purpose—the *co-operative management of human affairs in the interest of social welfare*. This purpose cannot be denied. It has been our national purpose since the American Revolution. But the personal competence required of citizens to carry out this purpose today is far different from the competence required one hundred years ago. The insistent reasons for this difference in competence arise from the special conditions of today. The following conditions are among the most acute ones. Whatever the citizen may think about these problems, he must face them—for he must vote frequently on proposed means for solving them.

#### ACUTE CIVIC PROBLEMS

1. Insecurity of individuals and of industry
2. Rights of private property
3. Conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources
4. National aspects of world problems
5. Continued insistence upon the changing of civic organizations
6. Alleged hopelessness of civic action
7. Alleged suppression of facts; the blight of propaganda
8. Permanent unemployment of millions of adults
9. Governmental aid in social welfare
10. Crime and criminals

The equipment of citizens for facing these problems is probably better now than it was formerly, because our

<sup>1</sup> Roosevelt, Franklin D., Inaugural Address, January 20, 1937.

civic resources have been increased and improved. Still better distribution of these civic resources to all citizens is needed. Each of the following items implies the problem of the universal distribution of the benefits of our new civic resources:

NEW CIVIC RESOURCES TO BE DISTRIBUTED  
TO ALL CITIZENS

1. Heightened intellectual level of citizens
2. Improved health facilities
3. Increased resources through science, invention, and discovery
4. Improved means of transportation, travel, and communication
5. Increased number of books and magazines
6. Increased and improved recreational facilities
7. Increased music and art resources
8. Increased activity of welfare agencies
9. Heightened standards of living and housing

All these new problems and resources call for co-operative planning and management. All these issues and many others are fundamental for common welfare. If they are to be faced successfully, individual citizens must pool their judgments and then act together. Except for one condition, it is true that the solution of these problems might be found by one man or by a small group of men and then forced upon all the people, as is being done in several European countries today. This one condition is, however, all-important and cannot be set aside: It is, simply, that America has a past that makes such solutions both unwelcome and impractical. To solve our problems, we must learn our history. Our history teaches us that if



NEW CIVIC RESOURCES OF OUR TIME

we are to preserve American democracy, *we must work together in solving our problems, and that we must apply our solutions gradually and not by sudden revolution.* Planning and co-ordination of solutions may take place suddenly in an unorganized, backward country, but not in an organized, advanced nation.

National character and national success are born of individual character and individual success. The common welfare of the nation demands that our people adopt for themselves, as co-operating individuals, the "marks of high character," and that they direct themselves toward attaining the "marks of success" for the nation as a whole.

For this high endeavor the best possible personal and social adjustment is needed. The citizen who would adjust and govern other people must first adjust and govern himself. To do so, every person must seek the best guides to living; he must study and practice the ways of successful life; he must adjust himself to social institutions; and he must develop himself to follow the best design for living that he can create.

So far, we have emphasized the citizen's duty and service. But citizenship has another characteristic, as have all other social institutions. This is the bond which unites all members of a group by the common principles that underlie all social organizations. For citizens in America, the common principle is stated in the document on which our government is based. To the extent that such a basis underlies the national life of our people, we are bound together as a nation. For this reason everyone should study the Constitution of the United States as well as the changes that have taken place as expressions of our national development.

Citizenship grows out of the people of a nation. Citizens

mold the nation and the nation molds its citizens. The best nation is that which binds people together for the best purposes and for the mutual welfare of all its citizens. The best citizens are those who recognize this bond, accepting the benefits of national organization and fulfilling their duties to their nation.

### *Pupil Activities*

1. Why is character difficult to define?
2. Trace an action, as carefully as you can, from the stimulation of protoplasm (Chapter III) to the appearance of the action as an expression of character. An action such as any of the following samples may be used: the selection of a well-balanced luncheon, a sample of good sportsmanship in a game, telling the truth, or arriving on time.
3. If you have a friend on whom you can rely in any situation, try this: (1) Watch your friend as he carries on a fairly important action; (2) interpret his action as well as you can; and (3) compare notes with him to see whether or not you agree about the character that acted off stage behind his action.
4. Schopenhauer, a philosopher, said, "Men best show their character in trifles, where they are not on their guard." How does this statement agree with your observations?
5. Examine the following activities to find out the extent to which each activity requires the six forms of competence:
  - (1) Membership in any school organization
  - (2) Membership in any community organization
  - (3) Choosing a vocation
  - (4) Citizenship
  - (5) Planning a school party
  - (6) Classwork for a week in any school subject
6. If any of the six forms of competence seem to be absent from the activities in Question 5, how could the activity be

changed so as to include them? Which forms of competence did you use in studying and answering the preceding question?

7. What relation has each of the six forms of competence to the following moral problems taken from Richard C. Cabot's *The Meaning of Right and Wrong* (The Macmillan Company, 1933):

- (1) Finding a moral alibi
- (2) Procrastination of something that must be done some time
- (3) Not counting "just this time"
- (4) "Convincing ourselves that we are nobody" or "sheep-mindedness"
- (5) Heroism
- (6) Humaneness toward animals
- (7) Honesty

8. Cicero said: "Everyone is least known to himself, and the most difficult task is to get acquainted with one's own character." What are some of the steps in performing this "difficult task"?

9. What is meant by "human perfection"?

10. The word "conscience" is not used in this chapter. Prepare a statement about conscience, including these points (Section 6 of this chapter may help you here): (1) a definition or description of what you mean by conscience; and (2) how one's conscience can be developed or improved.

11. With what statements of Section 6 do you disagree? With what statements do you agree?

12. If you can think of a person who appears to have been successful, even though his character seems bad, analyze both his character and success with reference to the items in Section 7. Do the same for a man who seems to have failed in spite of having high character.

13. What relation has character to citizenship?

14. What place have the following institutions in the development of character and citizenship?



- |                            |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| (1) The Red Cross          | (4) Athletics |
| (2) The White Cross        | (5) Schools   |
| (3) Boys' and girls' camps | (6) Churches  |

15. Why must the citizen who would adjust and govern other people, first adjust and govern himself?

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# Index

## A

- Ability, and vocational choice, 130-131
- Accomplishment, as a social problem, 4, 7; as a personal problem, Chapter VI
- Action, forced, 57-58; disguise of, 58; clues to, 59-60; motives for, 60-62; investigation of, 62-65
- Adamic, Louis, on contributions of immigrants, 125-126
- Adjustment, Unit III; and success, Chapter I; personal and social, 5; and readjustment, 5-6, 8; success dependent on, 7-8; and environment, 25-28; and science, 27-28; man's capacity for, 43-46
- Advancement, real problem of, 7
- Aesthetic competence, 235
- Aims, in learning, 148-152
- Alcohol, effect on health, 393
- Alertness, and opportunities, 94-95
- Analysis, in study, 207; of self, 228ff.
- Application, 172-174
- Art, and success, 54, 274
- Atoms, as basis of conduct, 33
- Attitudes, as environment, 23-25, 83-84

## B

- Balance, a factor in mental hygiene, 420
- Behavior, people's, as a guide, 56ff.; forced nature of, 57. *See* Conduct
- Bill of Rights, 308-311

- Bodily structure, and successful living, Chapter III
- Books, effect of on personality, 362

## C

- Character, Chapter XVIII; marks of, 434-435, 457-458; as personal adjustment, 438-445; how to develop, 445-453; qualities necessary for, 442-443, 446-452. *See* *Morals*
- Charm, 343ff.; contrasted with manners, 347
- Chase, Stuart, 162
- Cheating, as ineffective conduct, 58-59
- Chemical composition of the body, 32ff.
- Choice, ability to make, 98-100; vocational, 127-132
- Church, effect on personality, 363
- Circumstance, as a compulsion to action, 82-84
- Citizenship, 460ff.
- Civic problems, 463
- Civic resources, 464
- Climate, effects on conduct, 19-20
- Clubs, 312-319
- Compulsion, disadvantages of, 76ff.; through force of circumstances, 83
- Concentration, in reading, 185-186; suggestions for, 186; in study, 213
- Conduct, effects of geographical conditions on, 19-20; other human beings and, 23, 56ff.; disguised, 40, 58; social criteria of, 59; mo-

- tives for, Chapter V; relation of schools to, Chapter XIII. *See* Character and Morals
- Conflict, 76ff.; in homes, 267-268; an enemy of mental health, 408-410
- Conscience, 412-414
- Constitution, Bill of Rights, 308-311, 466
- Co-operation, 100-106
- Cramming, as a means of learning, 168
- Creative competence, 234-235, 449-450
- Crime, and mental hygiene, 412, 457

## D

- Deduction, as a study method, 208-209
- Delusion, as a factor in mental health, 410
- Design for living, American, 313-315, 319; institutional, 450, 466
- Desires, related to wants, 79; nature of, 80; relation to values, 339-341
- Diet, 390-391
- Differences, among people, capitalizing, Chapter VII, 128-132; why there are differences, 114-117; individual, 117-120; racial, 120-126; what to do about, 126-128
- Discoveries, how people use, 109-111
- Disguise, of feelings, 58-59

## E

- Education, as a guide, Chapter IV, 89
- Effort, necessary for character, 438-439, 453-455
- Emergent qualities, in bodily structure, 33-34
- Emotional learning, 156-157
- Emotions, and conduct, 60-62
- English, as a guide to living, 53
- Environment, and success, Chapter II; meaning of, 12; relation to heredity, 13-16; and geographical

- conditions, 16-20; and industrial development, 17-18; human beings as, 20-25; improvement of, 25-28; and machines, 107-108; and discovery, 108-111; and homes, 263-270
- Equipment, personal, 42, 89
- Examinations, study for, 215-219
- Exercise, place of in physical hygiene, 401-403
- Experimental method, 63-65

## F

- Failure, 2, 3-4; and occasional success, 7
- Family, Chapter XII
- Fatigue, and physical health, 389-390
- Fear, as a factor in mental health, 406
- First things first, 88-89, 93
- Flexibility, as a social problem, 6
- Foreign languages, as guides, 53
- Fosdick, Harry Emerson, 341-342, 345

## G

- Gary, Indiana, 17-19, 120
- Geographical conditions, as environment, 16-20
- Glands, 40; in physical hygiene, 391-392
- Government, effect on the individual, 363. *See* Citizenship
- Grouchiness, as costly, 27
- Group workers, 100-106
- Guidance, through school subjects, Chapter IV; through investigation, 62-65; capitalizing differences in, 127-132; through study, 205

## H

- Habits, and environment, 27, 43; of expression, 57; in learning, 160-162; and concentration, 185; health, 397-403

Harnessing, of personal resources, 89ff.  
 Haste, as a cause of breakdown, 396-397  
 Health, and environment, 16-17. *See* Hygiene  
 Heredity, and environment, 13-16; and wants, 80  
 History, as a guide, 52  
 Home living, Chapter XII; standards of, 277-283; effect on personality, 363  
 Hoover, Herbert, 238-240  
 Human beings, as environment, 20-25; as unique, 43-46  
 Human body, chemical nature of, 32  
 Humor, and mental health, 425  
 Hygiene, and learning, 143-148; physical and mental, Chapter XVII

## I

Ickes, Harold L., 237  
 Ideals, nature of, 82  
 Improvement, of environment, 25-28; of learning, 157-160; of homes, 269-270  
 Impulses, and motives, 74ff.; characteristics of, 74  
 Induction, as a study method, 209-211  
 Industrial development, and environment, 17-18  
 Institutions, as environment, 24-25, 27-28, Chapter XIV  
 Interest, and vocational choice, 129-130  
 Interference, ways of reacting to, 76ff.  
 Inventions, how people use, 107-111  
 Inventory, personal, 229ff.  
 Investigation, types of, 62-63; as a guide to living, 62

## K

Keats, John, 7  
 Knowledge, acquiring, 154-155, 233;

adequate, as a quality of character, 446-447

## L

Laziness, and mental hygiene, 415-416  
 Learning, human and animal, 44; as adjustment, Chapter VIII; definition of, 139; effective, 139-142, 160-174; in old and modern days, 141; getting ready for, 142-148; mental condition in, 144; interest in, 145-147; analysis in, 148; early preparation for, 148; aims in, 148-152; types of, 152-157; improvement of, 157-160; habit in, 160-165; trial and error in, 165-167; cramming, 168; memory in, 169-170; organization in, 171-172; applying, 172-174  
 Life periods, in relation to physical hygiene, 400-401  
 Lincoln, Abraham, 236-237, 239, 244  
 Lone workers, 100-106

## M

Machine, man as a, 31, 41-42  
 Manners, Chapter XV  
 Mathematics, as a guide, 52-53  
 Measurement, as a basis of adjustment, 63  
 Memory, 169-170  
 Mental hygiene, Chapter XVII; and learning, 143-148; definition, 404; relation to physical hygiene, 404; enemies of, 406-416; friends of, 416-425; as personal efficiency, 425-427; helping others toward, 427; self-improvement in, 430  
 Money, as an incentive, 85-86; effect on personality, 363  
 Morals, Chapter XV. *See* Character  
 Motion pictures, as environment, 23-24; effect on personality, 362-363

Motives, 60-62, Chapter V; examples of, 71; in everyday life, 72  
 Motor learning, 153-154  
 Music, and success, 54, 274

## N

Narcotic drugs, effect on physical health, 393  
 Newcomers, study of, 241-244

## O

Observation, as a means of adjustment, 62  
 Occupational survey, 130-131  
 Opportunity, and success, 7; and environment, 25-28; making, 94-100  
 Organism, man's unique, 43-46  
 Organization, of work, 170-172  
 Organizations, XYZ, 125-126; choosing and planning, 312-319; effects of, 319-323

## P

Parent education, 274-275  
 People, adjustment to, Chapter XI  
 Personal adjustment, and success, 5, 128; to people and situations, Chapter XI  
 Personality, Chapter XVI; how it develops, 355; definition of, 355; individual control of, 357; effect of disease on, 358; value of, 359; development of, 359-361; factors in, 361-363; essential traits of, 364-380; controlling one's own, 381-383  
 Physical competence, inventory, 42, 232  
 Physical education, as a guide to living, 54; and success, 54  
 Physical hygiene, and learning, 143; and reading, 184; meaning of, 386-388; early years in, 388; breakdowns in, 389-397  
 Physicians, place of in physical hygiene, 399

Planning, 6; of organizations, 312-319  
 Play, 424-425  
 Practice, effective, 167-169  
 Prejudices, as poor guides, 57  
 Problem, of success, 8-10; solving, 155-156, 232  
 Problem-solving competence, 448  
 Progressive morality, 335-345  
 Protoplasm, as basis of life, 34; characteristics of, 35-38  
 Provincialism, 22-23  
 Psychology, as a guide, 55-56; social, 56ff.

## R

Racial differences, 120-126  
 Radio, as an institution, 305-308  
 Reactors, kinds of, 40  
 Readiness, for learning, 142-148  
 Reading, as adjustment, Chapter IX; differences of ability in, 178; rates, 179; types of, 181-183; keys to, 184; vocabulary in, 186; common defects in, 187-192; self-improvement in, 192-199  
 Readjustment, and success, 5-6, 8, 95-98; and environment, 13; for learning, 142-148  
 Recreation, and character, 441  
 Relaxation, and health, 397-399  
 Resources, personal, 93-94, 299ff.  
 Reviews, importance of distributing, 217  
 Rhythm, in work and play, 399  
 Ripley, Robert L., 3, 4, 6  
 Roosevelt, Franklin D., 237, 240, 462-463  
 Roosevelt, Theodore, 13-15, 119

## S

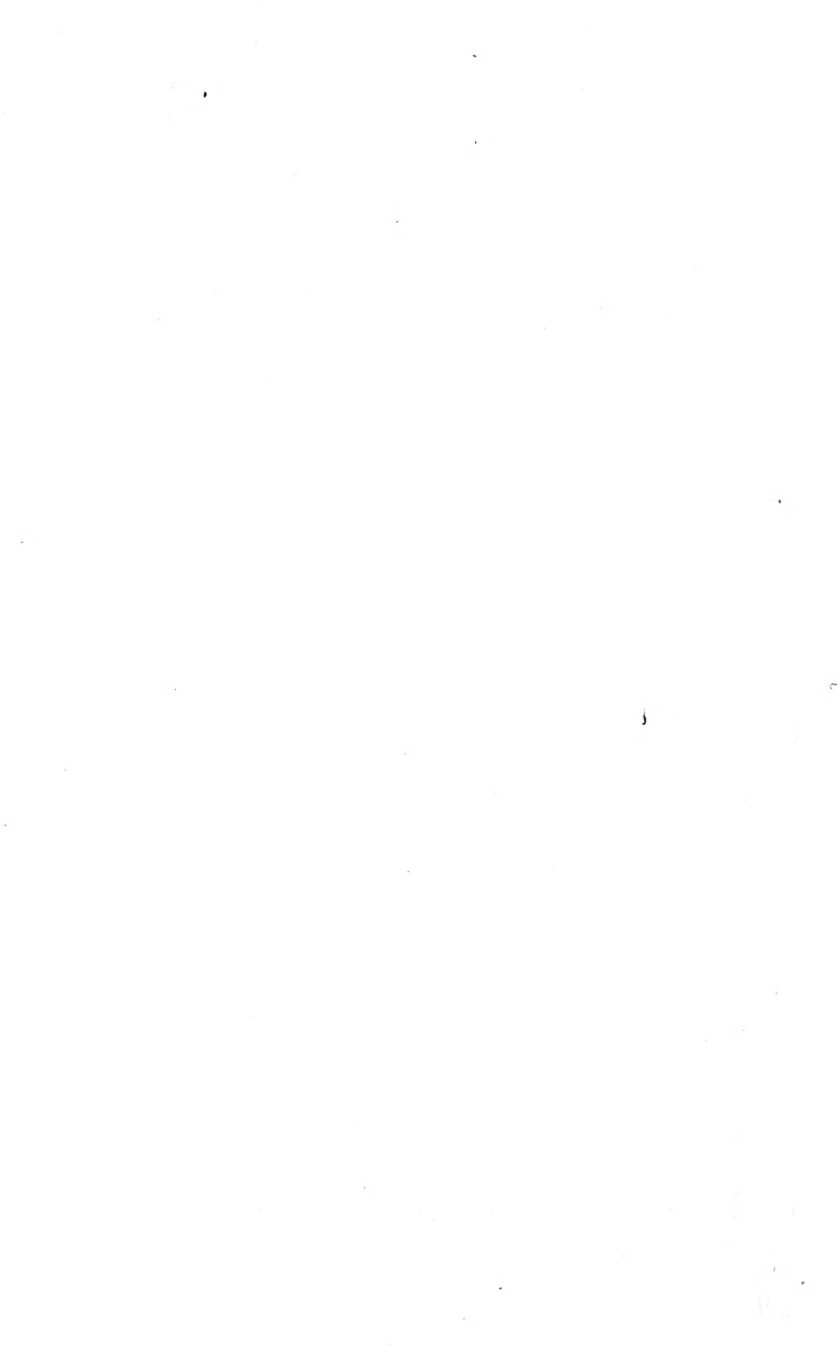
Sandburg, Carl, 237  
 Satisfaction, as a social problem, 79-82  
 School, studies and successful living, Chapter IV; life, Chapter XIII;

- as a main current of life, 286-289;
  - relation to other life, 289-295; to conduct, 296-300
  - Schweitzer, Albert, 247-248
  - Science, and adjustment, 26-27; as a guide, 53-54
  - Security, place of in producing mental health, 423-424; lack of, 463
  - Self-analysis, 228ff.
  - Self, study of, 229ff.
  - Sex, differences in abilities, 119-120
  - Situations, adjustment to, 247-255
  - Skill, 233, 447-448
  - Sleep, in relation to hygiene, 397
  - Social adjustment, Unit IV
  - Social climate, 20-25
  - Social competence, 234, 448-449
  - Social customs of home living, standards of, 282
  - Social institutions, Chapter XIV; definition of, 304-305; interdependence, 305-311
  - Social learning, 156
  - Social problem, accomplishment as a, 4; and morals, 329-335
  - Social relations, success and, 4-5, Chapters XI, XIV
  - Social science, relation to success, 4-5; as the study of people, 4; as science of success, 7; as the study of clues to action, 59-60; relation to investigation, 62-65
  - Standards, of living, and environment, 24, 27; of homes, 277-283
  - Structure, and conduct, Chapter III, 39-40; three divisions of, 40; and learning capacity, 43-46; bodily, and successful living, 114-120
  - Study, of conduct, 58ff.; as personal adjustment, Chapter X, 202; need for, 202; types of, 205-206; tools for, 207-215; analysis in, 207; for examinations, 215-219; of words, 219-224; of people, 236-246
  - Success, and adjustment, Chapter I; formula for, 6; kinds of, 6-7; science of as social science, 7; increasing prospects of, 8; as a problem, 8-10; conditions of, 9; and environment, Chapter II, 83-84; and school studies, Chapter IV; marks of, 456
  - Successful living, Unit I; key to, 3-6
  - Superstitions, as poor guides, 57
  - Suspicion, an enemy of mental health, 415
- T
- Talent, and self-expression, 84-85
  - Teachers, and social climate, 22; and pupils, 294
  - Tests, in the study of people, 246-247; for judging right and wrong, 341-342
  - Tobacco, smokers' carelessness a fire danger, 393
  - Tolerance, 419
  - Toxemia, effect on physical health, 392-393
  - Trial and error, in learning, 165
- U
- Uniqueness, man's, 43-46
- V
- Values, moral, 337-345
  - Versatility, man's, 45-46
  - Vocabulary, importance in reading, 186-187; how to check, 193-195
  - Vocational guidance, 127-132
  - Volitional competence, 236, 450-452
- W
- Wants, kinds and nature of, 79-82
  - Wishes, nature of, 81; and ideals, 82
  - Women, employment of, 275
  - Words, how they get meanings, 219-224. *See* Vocabulary
  - Workers, lone and group, 100-106
  - Worry, as a cause of poor mental health, 410









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